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We beg to state that we decline to return or to enter into correspondence as to rejected communications; and to this rule we can make no exception. Manuscripts not acknowledged within four weeks are rejected.

NOTES OF THE WEEK.

Not much more is definitely known this week of the progress of the conversations between France and Germany. At the beginning of the week we were waiting for the German answer or counter-proposals to reach Paris; and, though this answer has now itself been answered, we are still uncertain of what Germany has actually proposed. Did Germany demand a privileged position in Morocco with partial control of the State services?—or does Germany limit her demands to an equality of opportunity with the other Powers? If Germany still demands special privileges in Morocco, negotiations are no nearer the end than they were a week ago.

France is willing to buy Germany out of Morocco with concessions of territory hereafter to be determined. But France will not pay this price for nothing. Conjectures as to what Germany has really claimed have been wonderfully varied. Almost contemporary with the despatch of the German counter-proposals to Paris a "semi-official" German newspaper declared that Germany asked for simple commercial equality with the other Powers. Other "semi-official" communications have put Germany's demands at thirty per cent. of the State services in Morocco. French newspapers certainly believe this to be nearer the truth. Whatever Germany has asked France has answered it with noticeable quickness. It would seem as if France had been compelled to a very direct and simple answer one way or the other.

The German Socialist party is in a fighting mood. Its numbers have grown remarkably in the last year, and it looks forward to great victories at the coming election. But the Jena meeting put most domestic points aside and dealt with the international situation.

It protested, in the usual fashion, against the Government's supposed intention of going to war about Morocco, but it held that the Government was right to interfere. Its approval was extended to the harsh method of interference adopted. Herr Bebel insisted on the supreme value of force in the modern world in a style worthy of the Emperor himself.

One hoped of Russia that assassination was gradually dropping out of her politics. Since the brief terrible period 1905-6 there has been nothing comparable to the attempt on M. Stolypin in the second of those years. Of that crime there were thirty victims; but M. Stolypin escaped, and for five years he has endeavoured to work the patch-work constitution he inherited from the revolution. All through he has shown himself the firm, capable man, as brave as a lion in a position to try the nerves and ingenuity of the strongest.

What are the names of the Unionists—assuming there really are such Unionists—who have taken seriously the Eighty Club request for information about Ulster's feelings about Home Rule? One would like to examine their bumps. We agree with Sir Edward Carson that such innocence is very amusing. The Eighty Club is made up of absolutely stereotyped, correct caucus-controlled politicians, who, like other members of other similar bodies, are not expected—and do not expect—to think for themselves. The politics of Smith, Brown, and Jones of the Eighty Club are absolutely identical; there is no more difference in their sets of views or prejudices than in the patterns of, say, three penny stamps bought over the Post Office counter.

On Home Rule, as on the Parliament Bill, or on any other leading item on the Liberal programme, their minds are made up for them by the party machines. They are stamped with one die. Does any Unionist really suppose that any section of the Eighty Club has an open or persuadable mind on Home Rule? No; we shall not be able to defeat Home Rule by convincing the Eighty Club of the justice of Unionism and of the case of Ulster. Sir Edward Carson declares his belief that the Irish loyalists will by fighting to the last come out triumphant—there is the only true way of saving Ulster at any rate from Home Rule. Liberals who

believe that Ulster is going to disarm before the fight—as the House of Lords did—are making a terrible mistake. Belfast does not sport the Rosebery colours.

The Radical plan in the matter of Payment of Members is the good old plan—to take the cash and let the credit go. No wonder then that there is an outcry among Radicals and in their newspapers against Mr. Arthur Lee M.P., Mr. Bird M.P., and Mr. Fell M.P. These Unionist politicians propose another plan and announce that they mean to adopt it—to take the credit, if any, and let the cash go. They plainly declare that they will return the money to the taxpayers from whom it has been by Act of Parliament filched. Whereupon the Liberals raise a loud cry that this is corruption and that this is advertising themselves with their constituents and making a parade of virtue and so on.

One can quite understand that the attitude of these politicians is disgusting to a large number of Radical and Labour M.P.s who regard Payment of Members as a nice little nest egg for themselves and their families. Four hundred a year is not to be sneezed at; and if by and by a Liberal Government can be wheedled into granting its rank and file and its sutlers second-class travelling expenses and free postage, Parliament will really become quite one of the recognised Liberal professions. But what is the use of the £400 a year if it is all to be flung away or flung back on the taxpayers from whom it has been hardly won? And, obviously, if people like Mr. Fell and Mr. Bird go about announcing this as their plan, members who, instead, prefer to keep the cash and spend it on their own necessities and pleasures, will become rather marked and unpopular. One can fully understand this Radical point of view, and, humanly, one may sympathise with the sufferers. But it is not polite, it is not even just, to accuse Mr. Bird and Mr. Fell of corruption and of self-advertisement and parade of virtue because they refuse to take the money which they never asked for and do not desire.

But, say the Liberal newspapers, if Mr. Lee, Mr. Bird and Mr. Fell do not want the money all they need do is quietly to return it to Mr. Lloyd George at the Treasury. Here again the Liberal or Radical attitude is so very easy to understand! The idea is to hush up the Payment of Members matter, not to make the slightest fuss about it. If much is said, the taxpayers will really awake. Radical voters will begin to wonder why Radical M.P.s take their money, whilst Unionist M.P.s refuse to take it. Payment of Members will grow odious if this kind of thing goes on. It may even be that hecklers on public platforms at election time will put offensive personal questions to their representatives or candidates as to how the £400 a year was spent. And, generally, there is very little doubt that the man who takes the money will not be in such a pleasant position, politically, as the man who returns it. Small wonder then that Mr. Lee, Mr. Bird and Mr. Fell are disliked and sneered at by the Radicals and their press to-day. Why could they not—in the interest of Radical M.P.s—be virtuous in dead secret and quiet?

For our part we are glad that they have made their plans public. Doing so, they greatly inconvenience the Radicals and they draw public attention to a scandalous job. Payment of Members has been sneaked through Parliament. Neither the Government nor their supporters dared to put it on the front page of their programme. On the whole, a constituent's idea of his member's duty is that his member should pay him something—not by any means that he should pay his member something. Why should not the Conservative party announce that when it comes into office it will propose the abolition of Payment of Members? The plan should be distinctly popular with the bulk of the electors. The number of voters who are keen for Payment of Members must be extremely small. An Englishman's privilege is to vote; he will never regard it as anything but his pain to pay.

Lord Lochee of Gowrie was once a familiar House of Commons man—Mr. Edmund Robertson, M.P. for Dundee. He was a faithful public servant, and a steady orthodox Liberal who was in several Liberal Governments. Mr. Robertson was good in exposition, and could master and clearly explain difficult departmental measures. We can only recall one mistake he made in his House of Commons days—when, as ex-Civil Lord of the Admiralty, he rose one evening from an almost deserted Liberal bench in an almost deserted House and attacked Mr. Chamberlain with tremendous spirit, training on the great man all the heavy guns which he had never had a chance of letting off as Civil Lord. That official, according to Louis Jennings, is paid a thousand a year to keep his mouth closed in the House and open in the country; Mr. Robertson broke the rule.

Towards the close of his speech the House filled up, expecting the close of the debate, and Mr. Chamberlain himself came in. Mr. Chamberlain gathered from a friend what Mr. Robertson had been doing. He rose to end the debate, so far as we can remember, and fixing his eyeglass, glanced at Mr. Robertson in an amused way and then at his son. Then in a few words he lightly congratulated his son—who happened to be Civil Lord at the time—on his great prospects. "Who knows?"—his congratulation seemed to say—"you, my son, may one day as ex-Civil Lord have a like opportunity of attacking and demolishing a great adversary!" The House was now full, the news having got out that Mr. Chamberlain was going to make fun of the adventurous Mr. Robertson; and an immense shout of laughter arose and continued for some moments. Mr. Robertson took it very well, and he had the good sense to leave Mr. Chamberlain alone afterwards.

What is a job? Was putting Mr. Gladstone into Kilmarnock Burghs a job? We ventured last week to suggest that it was; and the question has been very seriously discussed in some of the Radical newspapers. We should say that an attempt to gain a political end—in this case a seat for a Radical member of Parliament—by means utterly irrelevant to any present question or issue of policy was a job. The term "job" for Kilmarnock was perfectly in order. Mr. Gladstone's ancestry and the purity of his Scottish blood have nothing whatever to do with the political issues which will ostensibly move the Kilmarnock electors in choosing their representative. The Master of Elibank's letter was beside the point if Radical professions go for anything at all. This attempt to get Mr. Gladstone in for Kilmarnock because he was a Scot and the grandson of a statesman who might have refused to sit in the same Cabinet with Mr. George may definitely be termed a job without putting any very great strain upon the English language.

The wild men of the Labour party are often victims of the *idée fixe*. Those who study it have proclaimed this to be one of the most melancholy degrees of mania. The *idée* of Mr. Tillett has to do with bloodthirsty soldiers who seized the opportunity of a strike being toward to shoot down peaceable workmen. Before Mr. Tillett begins to speak you know it will be about the soldiers. It is impossible to discover where he got his *idée* from. That is part of the disease. Mr. Hardie's *idée* is about a Government which helped some railway companies to coerce their employés into submission. Mr. Hardie's case seems incurable. Mr. Lloyd George gave him the strongest Parliamentary dose ever administered to a public man. But the *idée* persists. Both Mr. Hardie and Mr. Tillett are frequently silent for several hours, and one begins to glimpse a possible cure. Then suddenly one or other begins it all over again. The "Daily News" is thoroughly despondent about Mr. Hardie.

Mr. Churchill's latest idea is a volunteer police force; not to put down strikes, of course; but to be used in strikes. There is no information yet as to who are to be eligible. Will Trade Unionists and Socialists

and Syndicalists be admitted? If they are, strikers will have an easy time. If not, then Comrade Keir Hardie will have something to say. Mr. Churchill's ambiguous scheme is not so original as it looks. It has a family likeness to the Citizen Army laughed out by the brethren at the Trade Union Congress. Mr. Churchill's amateur police force may have been suggested by its sister service—Lord Haldane's Territorials. What may really appeal to Mr. Churchill is that the new police territories would give him an excuse for not calling out those dreadful real soldiers. He could always declare there was a sufficient local police force; he would save himself from many a rub on raw places.

Food-rioting has not altogether disappeared in the North of France. There have indeed been several serious cases during the week; but the emissaries of the General Confederation of Labour are returning to Paris as autumn advances, and there is some danger in Paris. Several of the big stores are being guarded by the police. Our late strikes perhaps diverted mobs from attacking innocent retail dealers and working farmers and butchers. Labour leaders here have not taken to the tactics of the Confederation of inciting attacks on provision shops; yet retail prices here for butter and milk and vegetables, which ought to have been cheaper than at other times of the year, have probably been quite as high as in France.

It seems likely that the drought will keep some things dearer than they would have been in both countries. But the Minister of Agriculture in France has made a point of reassuring people as to cereals and meat. France has one considerable advantage over ourselves. Her own cereal crops can supply the whole country with bread, even though the number of acres under cultivation is slightly less than it was last year; and the stock of cattle shows no sign of falling off. M. Pains in his efforts to make the consumer less anxious is hardly so consolatory to the producer. He remarks that as the drought made fodder expensive, the farmers will send their cattle to market instead of keeping them at unusual expense. Political economy is always a dismal science to somebody or other.

The non-Unionists' witnesses at the Railway Commission were prepared to say a good word for the principle of the Conciliation Boards, though they held that the scheme had not been satisfactory either in its working or in its results. They had had little fault to find with the old system of negotiating directly with the companies, and some of them advocated a partial return to it. A feature of their evidence was their protest against the Unions, which they accused of stirring up trouble and of encouraging their members to boycott non-Unionist men. Another feature was the tone of the questions put to these witnesses by Mr. Arthur Henderson. Mr. Henderson evidently feels that he is there as the Union's advocate, and his methods were those of a counsel rather than a Commissioner. His line may be contrasted with that taken by the companies' representative, Sir T. R. Ellis.

The companies, so far as their case has yet been developed, represent the Unions as the villains of the piece. They are charged with perverting Conciliation Boards from their proper purpose by bringing before them not actual difficulties connected with hours and wages but the extravagant ideas embodied in the "national programme". The character of this programme and the fact that it represents the views of only about a quarter of the men eligible for Union membership are sufficient objections to recognition. But Mr. Walker, of the North-Western, took wider ground. Recognition, he argued, would be fatal to discipline. Two hands cannot wield one sceptre, and there would be an end to railway organisation if the Unions could censure a man whom the company praised. Mr. Walker insisted that his point of view disposed of the suggested

parallel between railways and other trades. The collapse of railway discipline would disorganise not a single industry but the whole community, and for this reason the companies must be given exceptional authority.

Whatever the result of the elections in Canada, the fight put up by the Conservatives has been one of their best. They have exposed the Government's motives, they have riddled the arguments advanced in favour of Reciprocity, and they have shown the Laurier policy to be nothing more nor less than a great betrayal. Mr. Borden and his friends have been strong equally on the Canadian and the Imperial sides. Reciprocity will serve the interests not of Canada, but of the Americans, who seek to replenish their stores of food and raw material on easier terms, whilst securing a larger and freer market for their own wares. Even the farmers seem to realise that their advantage under the agreement will be illusory; the Canadian farmer would not be a gainer, the manufacturer would certainly be a loser. On the Imperial side, we have had statistics to prove that Great Britain would suffer to the precise amount that the United States benefited. Sir Wilfrid Laurier's assurance that Preference is safe is rank hypocrisy.

In Scotland anything connected with a University has far more popular interest than it would have in England, where the separation between University and ordinary life is more marked. There is hardly any division between the classes who do and those who do not go to the Universities. St. Andrews University has been celebrating this week the five hundredth year of its foundation; and the event may quite properly be described as a national one. It has been international, because most of the European Universities have been represented at the celebrations, and imperial as the Universities of the Overseas Dominions have sent representatives. Such a festival as this is brilliant as a spectacle. The multi-coloured gowns of the European Professors, most of them of mediæval cut and brilliance, are only to be seen on such an occasion. The graduates and students, too, of St. Andrews wear scarlet gowns. St. Andrews is the most mediæval of Scottish Universities; and it is a fitting scene for such pageantry.

Scottish Universities have blended the ancient and the modern development of the University more effectively than the old English Universities; though both arose in the age of classical and mediæval learning. In respect of University corporate life the Scottish Universities have not been so successful. There are no residential colleges; the reason being that as the bulk of the students are poor they have had to continue the open mediæval non-residential University as opposed to the collegiate system. Lord Balfour of Burleigh, the Chancellor, referred to the social defects of this non-residential system; though much has been done of recent years to remove it. The Scottish people are determined on their Universities approaching as near as may be a high ideal, and if poorer students cannot have the advantage of a residential system on account of cost, provision will be made for them, as has already been done by the payment of fees. Lord Balfour's remark that there is no more pauperism in students living on new endowments than on the old strikes a very different note from that of a characteristic passage in the brilliant pictorial address of Lord Rosebery about a spoon-fed nation.

Death's hammer has been busy among the pillars of Anglican episcopacy, but he seemed almost to have forgotten the venerable poet-patriarch who has so long been the pride of Irish Churchmen. Archbishop Alexander, though he had recently resigned the Primacy of All Ireland, was a remarkable survival from pre-Disestablishment days, and as Bishop of Derry helped to guide the Church of Ireland through her troubles. More of a Tractarian than Magee, and always impressed by the imaginative and historic aspects of great institutions,

he used his influence to stop Irish Churchmanship from rushing down the steep places. That anything of the Catholic system was retained was due in great measure to him. Elected to the Primacy in 1896, he became, one may say, the Grand Old Man of Ireland, in whom men of all faiths and parties gloried.

As a sacred poet Archbishop Alexander's lustre was eclipsed in the public eye by that of his wife, the author of so many famous hymns. As an orator he had the full-flavoured Irish eloquence which occasionally erred through defect of restraint, as when he complained in S. Mary's, Oxford, of the scented blasphemies of Renan, and of the odour of patchouli being blended with the olives of Gethsemane. But sometimes—as at the great Albert Hall meeting—he was magnificent. Swift, in a vein of savage satire, once denied that the English Whig Government sent Bishops to Ireland who were destitute of scholarship and character. On the contrary, men of the utmost eminence and virtue were invariably chosen. But, alas ! in crossing Hounslow Heath on their way to take up their duties they were one and all met by highwaymen, who stripped them of their episcopal raiment, and then went over to personate them ! But that was the eighteenth century. In the seventeenth the Church of Ireland was illustrated by the names of Ussher, Jeremy Taylor, and Bramhall. In the nineteenth it had Trench, Magee, and Alexander.

Wireless telephony is of the immediate future, perhaps. Meantime we should be satisfied with flying postmen. Letters are posted in special boxes, taken laboriously out of the way of their destination, and delivered by the Hendon to Windsor aerial mail-packet line of aeroplanes. Who will say now that the air has not been conquered? Mr. Charles Hubert, perhaps, would say it, who broke both his legs and smashed the mail-packet on Monday last. But this accident to Mr. Hubert is not so harsh a comment on our claim of conquest as were all the accidents which might have happened to Mr. Gustav Hamel on Saturday. Mr. Hubert's accident was due, apparently, to defects in his aeroplane. The accidents which might have happened to Mr. Hamel were due to the wind. There was a stiff breeze ; and in ordinary circumstances an airman might reasonably have refused to make the journey.

But the circumstances were not ordinary. There was a crowd expecting the first Royal Air Mail to start at 3.30 ; and naturally the pilots were anxious that the crowd should not be disappointed. That is where we see the folly of these public displays. Had conditions been very much worse, the airmen would probably still have started, and accidents would have happened. If the crowd is ignorant or brutal there will almost certainly be disaster. Scarcely a week ago an airman was jeered to his death by a French crowd ; and in the first days of the craze there were some ugly cases of the sort in England. There is certainly no need to encourage our airmen to be bold in experiment. What they have to resist is the demand made upon them again and again by crowds ignorant or careless of the risk to fly when the conditions are adverse. Forcing the pace is stupid risk of life and limb.

Mr. Havard Thomas' appointment as Professor of Sculpture is directly in line with the Slade School of Art's past policy. In contrast with the list of monthly visitors, who in succession undermine each other's particular method of infecting Royal Academy students with the ineradicable fatal poison of academic training, the list of masters at the Slade was already notable. As marked is the difference between the records of the two schools ; inevitably of course. It seems hard that a potential success at the Slade School should be doomed by the caprice of cruel parents to become a prize-winner in Burlington Gardens. In any case, what with Mr. Havard Thomas on its teaching staff and the revival of fresco painting on its syllabus, the Slade surely might bring hope and cheer to those who protest that in England is no good art school, no not one.

MUM'S THE WORD !

MR. ARTHUR LEE'S stinging letter to the press on Payment of Members seems to have hit the Liberals very hard. There is an outcry against his "parade of virtue". Mr. Lee has decided not to take the salary which the Liberal Government voted to him, and he has published the fact. Now this gives pain and deep offence to the Liberal party. What he should have done if he did not want the money, they argue warmly in their press, was to send it back with all possible secrecy and in all possible privacy to the source whence it came. It seems that in this extraordinarily delicate affair—at least as delicate as any woman's honour—the most absolute reticence should be strictly observed. Mum's the word ! You should take the money without saying "Thanks" above the breath; still more imperative, you must, if you do not want it, return the money without the faintest suggestion of a whisper of "No thanks". The whole of this business is to be carried through in dead silence. It really somewhat reminds one of a burglary in the dead of night, a housebreaker's job ; and the people who are to get the spoil are to be as secretive as the "receivers" of stolen property.

Mr. Arthur Lee's letter, we are assured, is questionable form ; whilst Mr. Fell and Mr. Bird, Unionist M.P.s who have offered to refund the money to the taxpayers in their own constituencies, are quite unspeakable. Mr. Ian Malcolm M.P., Mr. Hambro M.P., and Mr. Arnold Ward M.P., are also among the Unionists who have made like announcements ; and made them, we should say, in perfect good faith. Why should the "Daily Chronicle," which is wont to be a fair and humane paper in its personal references, call them "purse-proud"? That charge is really a little too far fetched. We note an odd thing by the way about Mr. Bird and the Wolverhampton Liberals. They are deeply offended at his offer to refund the salary ! They brand it as an "insult" to themselves ! But surely what is sauce for the goose is sauce for the gander ? Mr. Bird offers them money which they say they do not want. This is described as an insulting offer by Mr. Bird. But they forget that they voted in favour of M.P.s being likewise insulted by salaries whether these were wanted or not. Two can play at the insulting game of offering sums of money to people who do not desire them—though in the ordinary affairs of life it is passing rare to find even one playing at such an extraordinary game.

However we need not trouble to go deeper into the question of who is the greater or the prime insulter of the two, the Wolverhampton Liberals or the member for Wolverhampton. Let it pass as a trivial matter. It is more to the point to inquire how really is it bad form, in refusing the salary, to announce that you have refused it and why you have refused it ? The answer, we fancy, is quite simple : it is bad form because it puts your political opponents into an invidious position. Many of these opponents, frankly, desire the money. They do not wish to return a farthing of it to the taxpayers. Where in the world, they may argue, is the sense of taking the money from the taxpayer only to return it to him before you have had the least satisfaction out of it ? The argument, it can be said, is good sense ; and any Liberal, Radical, or Nationalist who voted for Payment of Members, and yet declines to take the whole four hundred now it is within his grasp, will be acting the part of a booby. Are they not now in the happy position of Dr. Peter Pangloss in Colman's "Heir-at-Law"? Have they not "For clear, A good four hundred pounds a year"? But we must admit in justice to the Liberal and Nationalist and Labour parties that we have not heard of such an eccentric within their ranks. There is no danger of any Liberal being drummed and whipped out of the party because he refuses to take the money.

One can quite agree then that Liberals who voted for the salary can take the salary, spend it wholly on themselves, and show perfect consistency in doing so. Let us also assent that the spending of it is

wholly their own affair; it is not for Unionists to pry into their account books and cheque book foils—that truly would be bad form. But the demand that those Unionists who reject the money should reject it in dead silence and secrecy is a bit of sublime absurdity. Why on earth should Mr. Arthur Lee, Mr. Fell and Mr. Bird and the others refrain from mentioning the matter lest Liberals, Nationalists and Labour M.P.s should appear at a disadvantage? They were not returned to Parliament that they might do all in their power to shield their political opponents from anything in the nature of odium or discomfort. When have Liberals, Nationalists and Labour M.P.s shown themselves so highly sensitive to the feelings of their Unionist opponents that they should now make this amazing demand? As a fact, the Liberal party and the Liberal press have always hunted keenly in a money chase of this kind; and if they have discovered, or thought they have discovered, any Unionist making public money out of politics, they have given tongue instantly and with one accord. But it is the old story: people who are very conscious of some fault in a foe—or a friend—and loud in their rebuke of it are often most guilty of the very fault themselves.

Mr. Lee and the other rejecting Unionists are fully justified in announcing that they are not taking the salary—though it is by no means imperative that they should do so. There is no parade of virtue whatever in sending back the money to the Treasury or in offering it to the taxpayers or in spending it on local charities or in the constituencies. It is taken partly from constituents—why may it not be partly at least spent on constituents? The feelings, the hypersensitiveness, of the Liberals in this matter leave us cold and unsympathetic. They need distress no Unionist. The Liberals voted themselves salaries at the cost of a public already overburdened by taxes. They did it without the sanction of the public; and they must be fully aware that, had this proposal been referred to the people, the reply would have been No. They must now bear the odium of their act. We cannot help thinking that it will be considerable, and that it will last for some time.

RADICALS AND THE BENCH.

ON Saturday last a public meeting was treated to another of those disgraceful Radical attacks upon the Judges with which we have grown too familiar of late. At Exeter football ground, in the presence of about 8000 people, "mostly wearing Liberal colours", Mr. St. Maur delivered himself of certain offensive remarks about Mr. Justice Ridley. This Mr. St. Maur was returned for Exeter at the last election, but was afterwards unseated on a scrutiny, for which leave was granted by the Judge whom he thought proper to malign. There is no reason to suppose that the examination of the votes was unfairly conducted and the result in itself justified the judicial decision. Nevertheless the disappointed candidate had the opportunity to declare that he and his friends "had fought honourably and won honourably" but that they had since "been robbed of the victory". That is to say a man is "robbed" when it is found that he is in possession of something which he has gained by a mistake! Mr. St. Maur's "fight"—no doubt honourably conducted so far as he was concerned—ended in a "victory" which, as the scrutiny showed, he obtained in error. If he drew a horse in a sweepstake and was awarded the prize by the inadvertence of stewards, who had misread one figure for another, would he maintain that he had been robbed of his money when the owner of the real winning ticket claimed and received the prize? Mr. St. Maur went on to refer to the unpleasant incident at Exeter station, and he went so far as to assert that Mr. Justice Ridley committed a common assault, for which he could have been bound over or fined by the magistrates. If that was the case Mr. St. Maur should have summoned his alleged assailant; the law gives no immunity to Judges of the High Court who assault the King's subjects. But as Mr. St. Maur

has made no attempt to substantiate his statement before a legal tribunal, we take leave to doubt his version of the facts; nor are we impressed when he tells us that "it was not for him to raise his hand against an old man". He was not required to raise his hand; and we should think more of his magnanimity if he had held his tongue.

He preferred to let that unruly member wag in a general attack upon the Judges of the High Court. The 8000 persons, "mostly wearing Liberal colours", at Exeter, were exhorted to believe that the judicial bench is permeated by partisanship, and that its occupants are ignorant, and perhaps corrupt. "What respect could be paid to men who showed bias in open Court while the trial was going on?" The speaker intimated that it would be the duty of the progressive party in the future to see that only the best and most impartial men were put upon the bench, which is a clear suggestion that the persons now occupying that "bad eminence" are not good and are not impartial. We know, of course, what it is that lies behind the innuendoes, and has inspired the calumnies. His Majesty's Judges are so deplorably deficient in civic virtue that when a Radical politician is before them they treat him precisely as if he were an ordinary individual. If the Friend of Progress, for example, is a party to an election petition, he does not receive that preferential treatment to which the purity of his principles obviously entitles him. The patriot will be held responsible for the proceedings done by his agents with his knowledge just as if he were a mere Conservative or even a Liberal Unionist. He may be unseated because somebody has been paying canvassers in his name, in accordance with the provisions of a pedantic Act of Parliament. And if his lofty emotion has induced him to make libellous statements as to the morals and conduct of his opponent, he may be cast in heavy damages by these unworthy wearers of the ermine, and a narrow-minded jury, regardless of that higher code of equity which ought to be applied to "political" lawsuits. It happens that a whole crop of these unfortunate cases followed the last General Election, and in the majority the result was unfavourable to the Radical champions. Some people might infer from this untoward circumstance merely that the ardour of the Ministerial supporters had too often carried them beyond the bounds of legitimate controversy, and caused them to overstep the limits of truth as well as courtesy. Ministerial speakers and writers know better. They are convinced that their misfortunes are due not to their own indiscretions but to the unfairness of Judges and presumably also of jurymen. If justice were properly understood in this still unenlightened country political libels would be "privileged", at least when the libellers were Radical candidates aspiring after the honour (and emoluments) of a seat in the House of Commons.

If these insinuations and aspersions came only from an occasional mortified mediocrity like Mr. St. Maur of Exeter, the matter would be of no great importance. But the attack on the administration and representatives of the law is systematic, it is persistent, it has its spokesmen in the highest Ministerial quarters, it has now almost established its right to a place on the regular party programme. No Home Secretary who has ever held office has done so much to weaken and discredit our legal system as Mr. Winston Churchill, alike by practice and by preaching. His interference with the penal process in favour of sentimentally interesting criminals is dangerous enough, but even this is not his worst assault upon the public security. He has caused even more injury by assisting to foster the impression among the ignorant and credulous that the Judges are swayed by social influences and party feeling in cases involving the interests of "the poor", or the sacred privileges of the person who for political purposes is technically described as the working-man. As though the able lawyers, who by their own industry and learning have won their way to the bench, were not, in the truest sense, working-men themselves! Many of them have sprung from the people. Some of them have known the meaning of poverty in their youth and

beyond it. All must have laboured with diligent zeal for years, or they would never have come to the front through the ranks of the most exacting and competitive profession in the world. There can be no more ridiculous perversion of the truth than to suggest that the Judges are as a body aristocratic by origin and associations, that they belong to the "parasitic" class, that they are mere wigged and gowned auxiliaries to the "idle rich", the peccant persons who lie under the ban of possessing leisure, land, or capital. None of the judges can have been idle, and such wealth as they may enjoy is due in nearly all cases to their own honourable exertions, much more arduous than those of the majority of their critics. They are well-paid, of course, though their salaries are not more than sufficient to induce the leading men at the bar to exchange their professional earnings for a fixed stipend. If £5000 per annum is not too much for a pushing platform agitator when the chances of the political game have hoisted him into the Cabinet, it is certainly not excessive payment for a consummate jurist or a great advocate appointed after many years of distinguished activity to a position of exceptional importance and wearing responsibility.

It is one of the anomalies of our system that these accomplished experts should have to administer the criminal law subject to a prerogative exercised on the advice of a vivacious young gentleman whose legal training can hardly have extended beyond the orderly room of a cavalry regiment. In most other civilised countries there is a Minister of Justice who is as a matter of course a lawyer; with us many of the functions of his department are left in the statesmanlike hands of a person no better qualified to discharge them than Mr. Winston Churchill. The arrangement has been tolerated as so many other anomalies are tolerated in Britain, because Ministers as a rule, recognising their limitations, have been wise enough to abstain from undue interference with the magistracy, and have almost invariably treated the Judges of the High Court with the respect which is part of the traditions of our public life. The dignity and independence of the judiciary are essential features of our unwritten constitution. We can endure much from the Executive and the Legislature so long as the sanctity of the law courts is unassailed, and their efficiency maintained. When we were impatient with Parliament and annoyed by Ministers we could always console ourselves with the philosophical aphorism :—

"For forms of government let fools contest;
That which is best administered is best."

Radicals, Socialists, and Labour men have departed from the admirable precedent. They seem bent on dragging the judiciary and the magistracy into the polemical arena, and working up the mass of ignorant voters to believe not only that "the law is a huss," but that it is a Tory and capitalistic ass as well. The natural consequence is that its agents of all grades find themselves disobeyed and defied. When Cabinet Ministers throw mud at the bench, it is not surprising that labourers on strike throw stones at the police.

PERSIA THE INVALID.

IT is now a little over two years since the body of Persian politicians, styled Nationalist, Constitutional or Liberal, obtained control of the Government at Teheran. We were asked to hail the event, as we were asked to hail the simultaneous triumph of the Young Turks, as a sign of the awakening of the Moslem world, though why the Moslem world on awakening should order itself on the West European model was not apparent. To suggest that what Persia needed was a strong man, and that a mere change in the machinery of Government would not meet the requirements of a desperate situation, was to display an ignorance and insolence like to that of the newspaper correspondents on the spot who were calling the whole affair comic opera. Nor were we allowed to have any doubts as

to the character of the new rulers of Persia. True, every writer on old Persia, from Gobineau downwards, had said that honesty did not exist in Persian politics; but the Nationalist movement was a protest against this state of things, therefore every Nationalist politician was an honest man. The people who talked in this way belonged to a group, the friends of Persia in England, which seems to have been composed chiefly of persons in search of a religion who had come upon Bahaiism, a sect much persecuted by the Shahs. "Bahaiism, world-religion of the future", proved to be one of the best cards in the hands of the young ambassadors of the cause in Europe; and one might almost have thought that the spiritual fate of the world was to be decided in a tumult outside the walls of Teheran. The English friends of Persia had the ear of a certain section of the London press, and took the line of insisting upon Russian falsity to the spirit of the Anglo-Russian Agreement which provided that neither power should interfere in the internal affairs of Persia; at the same time they urged that Great Britain had at the beginning encouraged the Nationalists in their aims, and must not leave them in the lurch in their unequal struggle against the Russian-backed Shah. The appeal fell flat. In truth, there is not in England a public opinion in regard to British policy in Persia. People know that this country has a certain trade with the South, and that she owns a sphere of influence, whatever that may be, in the South. But they refuse to be frightened by Russia, and it is only when Germany seems about to make a move in these parts that they become aware of the existence of the Middle-Eastern question. Anglo-Indians, however, have still some terror of Russian designs; and it was probably Anglo-Indians in Persia, of whom, by the way, Major Stokes is one, who gave the Nationalists their idea that Great Britain was prepared to go out of her way on their behalf. The other British residents err perhaps in the opposite direction; they have been so disgusted by the methods of the Nationalists that they would probably welcome all the Cossacks of Muscovy into Iran; the thicker their whip-thongs the better.

No one at home wants to exult over the ludicrous figure that the Persian Nationalists cut to-day. Certainly it was Great Britain's interest that the Constitutional venture should be a success. The sick Persia of the past had been a great inconvenience, and an always likely source of complications from which this country had no advantages to gain. Last autumn we just managed to avoid taking the first step towards an occupation of the South. There was a temporary improvement in the condition of the trade-routes; the Government adopted a wiser attitude to Russia, and seemed ready to accept advice and recognise its own incapacity for independent action. The ex-Shah, who was interviewed in Berlin about this time, said that nothing lay further from his thoughts than to disturb in any way the tranquillity of his old dominions. Persia, clearly, was an incurable invalid; one only hoped that she might prove a reasonable invalid. The inevitable intervention of Great Britain and Russia had been once more postponed; for a while very little was heard of Persia, except the weekly news of a change of Cabinet. One gathered, however, that there was more trouble ahead; it came in the unexpected shape of a Kajar reaction, led in the North by the ex-Shah himself and his brother the Shoa-es-Sultaneh; in the West by another member of the family, Salar-ed-Dowleh.

Evidently Mohamed Ali has more grit in him than was supposed; and we would like to see him re-enter the capital at the head of the Turcomans. He has at least as good a right as anyone to the spoils of power; not one of his enemies compels the slightest respect. Indeed when the news of his landing spread many of the former champions of the Constitution prepared forthwith to greet him as their lawful monarch. Thus the Sipahdar, who had been Prime Minister off and on for two years, retired to the Russian Legation in Teheran, a move which indicated that he was reconsidering his political opinions. The Shoa-es-Sultaneh had outnumbered the Govern-

ment troops at Dangham; the Salar-ed-Dowleh was active in Hamadan; and it was rumoured that the Turcomans were rallying in vast hordes to the standard of the ex-Shah. Not that anyone supposes that the substitution of a Turcoman for a Bahktiari ascendancy will effect any improvement in the state of the country; there is no reason to think that the ex-Shah, even if he recovers his throne, will be able to enforce respect for authority, or reorganise the administration and finance of the country. The Turcomans will replace the Bahktiari as the chartered brigands of the land—that is all.

Judging from the latest news, it seems improbable that the ex-Shah will sit again upon the throne of his ancestors; but his son the boy Shah will be perhaps turned out by the Salar-ed-Dowleh, who is doing well in Hamadan. Opinions vary as they come from Russian or Persian sources. This much is clear: Northern Persia which, previous to the ex-Shah's essay, was in a state of comparative quiet, will now require pacification, and we shall see a further despatch of Russian troops into the disturbed area for the keeping in check of the disappointed Turcomans; whereas, in the event of a Government victory, the Bahktiari and their kindred will continue ravaging in the South at the expense of British trade-interests. A Government victory—the phrase is absurd enough! There is no Government in Persia; one cannot even say that there are political parties. There are in Teheran a number of Europeanised gentlemen ready to play at being Cabinet Ministers for a week, or even a fortnight, at a time; when a "situation" arises, such as this plucky adventure of the ex-Shah, they call upon Ephraim, ex-revolutionary from the Caucasus, now head police-officer in Teheran, the organiser of many victories. It was this Ephraim who defeated the Sardar Arsal the other day; it was he who put down the revolt of last summer of which Satar-Khan, the troublesome patriot, was the leader. Since the capture of Teheran in 1909, in which he took a prominent part, Ephraim, like the Bahktiari, has been at the service of any and every Cabinet—his not to reason why. Evidently the system pleases him; for in Russia he was always "agin the Government", in Persia he is always with it.

CRIMINAL SPELLING CLASSES.

NOTHING is more ridiculous and unpleasant than the pretences at simplicity of an old and over-civilised era. It is like the efforts of an elderly person to prattle in childhood's accents—a truly disgusting spectacle. At one moment it is the simple life which is in vogue. The butter-making of Marie Antoinette and her ladies at the Petit Trianon had a certain naïveté and charm—both the eighteenth century artificiality and the affectation of escaping from it were pretty and artistic. So was all the shepherdess and maison-ornée business of the Georgian fashionables. But for the modern City man or smartly-gowned week-end to play at simple-living pranks is an intolerable folly.

Yet if we were all to walk about in brown holland, subsist on carrots and marry our daughters to the policeman or the 'bus-conductor, it would not much matter. Whereas to "simplify" the English language in the way certain faddy professors and professional cranks desire would be a crime of sickening magnitude. The theft of a thousand La Giocondas would be nothing to it. Last week the Simplified Spelling Conference, representing the American Simplified Spelling Board and the English Simplified Spelling Society, began a series of meetings at University College. The newspapers tell us that a good deal of the written language of this country has so far been spared, but that "the preliminary inaction of the Conference is recognised as having a sinister meaning". What this forebodes we have no idea; but we consider these silly and mischievous people to be quite as dangerous as political anarchists, and would suggest the suppression of their meetings by a police-raid. The transatlantic undesirables should be at once deported. America has done enough harm to the English language

as it is without making us write "nu" for "knew", "korf" for "cough", or "piktzer" for "picture". They do it wrong, being so majestical, to offer it the show of violence (or sho ov vierlunz).

It has been calculated that the citizens of the United States save forty thousand dollars a year by writing armor for armour and savior for saviour. We are promised a far larger financial gain if the whole Anglo-Saxon world will agree to write kum and gawn (or is it gorn?) for come and gone, seeing that all mankind would then so admire the re-modelled tongue of Englishmen that it would shortly become the language of the race, with great benefit to trade. Humanity talking and writing pidgin English would be the far-off divine event to which the whole creation has all along been moving. How much more sensible and comprehensible to write iun instead of iron, dam instead of damn, prapz instead of perhaps, and soshul instead of social! Professor Rippman says that "a complete scheme for simplified spelling has been drawn up from a basis of proposals worked out by Mr. William Archer". Large funds are forthcoming, a battalion of professors seems to be mobilised, and an active campaign, conducted by means of lectures and press articles, is to be launched in the autumn—which we suppose will be known in future as the ortum. And there is to be a tremendous effort to capture the poor little bairns in the elementary schools. There are children who are trained from infancy to steal and do evil. But here will be several millions of lads and lasses being brought up under these new criminal classes to murder and mutilate their mother tongue. Since the massacre of the innocents such a crime against childhood will not have been perpetrated.

Words, it is asserted, should be spelled as they are pronounced. But pronounced by whom? The Council school child talks about a lidy and a hevenink piper; also about farver and muvver. The will of the people at the polls is largely expressed by intelligent voters who say "abaht" and "oliday". Some members of an effete aristocracy omit the "g" in words ending with "ing". In the Midlands, on the other hand, such "g's" are pronounced hard—e.g. both the "g's" in "singing". Again, even now a number of dialectical variations survive, many of them highly interesting and valuable. Thus, old-fashioned Lincolnshire people call a miller a milner, so preserving the "n" which used to be at the end of "mill" (milne, cf. moulin). Thousands of such cases will occur to the folklorist. Are they all to be ignorantly effaced by the efforts of an Americo-cockney Conference which probably pronounces "girl" as "gurl" and sounds the "t" in "often"? By the bye, the alternative spelling of that word, when phoneticised, will have to be "orphan".

Every language is a storehouse of history and of poetic association. We mentioned just now the "ortum". But "autumn", and still more "auctumnal", at once gives the derivation from "auct", that which increases. The very difficulties of orthography are instructive. Thus the -ow, -o and -ough (or -augh) words—plough, dough, trough, daughter, laughter, and so forth—point to that digamma which is now on the point of extinction in almost all languages. These words were originally all pronounced alike, as they are still in local dialect. The "f" sound of "u" is curiously preserved in the English pronunciation of "lieutenant". For England to allow these and a myriad of like distinctions to be effaced by the steam-roller of democratic philistinism would be like a noble tearing up his pedigree, cutting down all his secular oaks and immemorial elms, burning his priceless pictures and furniture, and offering his lordly demesne in eligible building lots. It would be a reversal of all culture, and a lapse into the barbarism of Huns and Goths. Barnes, the Wessex poet-priest, once issued, if we remember rightly, a copy of the Gospels in the Dorset dialect; and the effect was far from irreverent. But imagine the Holy Scriptures printed phonetically! It is absurd to say that this is all a matter of custom and sentimental association. It might as well be argued that an Albert Parade lodging-house in the best Mid-Victorian "Queen Anne" style

will some day by weathering really come to look as though it had been designed at the beginning of the eighteenth century.

When people try to be amusing by the use of phonetic spelling, the effect is dismal. Artemus Ward is the only writer who ever made it really funny. Again, it is a complete mistake to represent uneducated folk or children as spelling phonetically when they try to spell naturally. They do nothing of the sort. Their spelling is often imaginative and curious, but a footman does not write, "I thort the onnerable Mister Jorge ad gawn hout". As for the spelling of our forefathers, before the Tudor period it was a bow drawn at a venture, and words came out as God pleased, though with a certain regard to etymology. Under Elizabeth and the earlier Stuarts orthography was picturesque and altogether delightful, especially in its freedom from pedantic adherence to consistency—in one verse of the 1611 Authorised Version the word "egg" is printed both as "eg" and as "eggge". Job, by the bye, in the same edition, is said to suffer from "biles". Modern woodleness and the levelling instinct would not tolerate nowadays any such rich variety and freedom. But if our tongue is stereotyped it is still a noble and glorious product of many centuries of effort after beauty and truth. For language is the highest of the arts.

As for the miserable utilitarian plea that the time and pain of children at school would be saved by their learning English in this ludicrous and loathsome disguise, it is to our mind an added condemnation of the phonetic craze. "Learning without tears"—that is to say, without trouble, industry and the application of the mind—is no learning at all. No pains, no gains, says the by-word. Learning to spell phonetically would be a mere mechanical treadmill. But for the exercise of intelligence and for drawing out the feeling of joy in the beautiful there is no such instrument in the world as the acquisition of a real literary language. Language was God's gift to man in Eden. Is its fragrance and exquisite structure to be now filched from the race by a coterie of busybodies and nobodies?

THE CITY.

IT was fortunate for the London Stock Exchange that the sudden collapse on the Berlin bourse, attributed to war scares, occurred on a Saturday. Opportunity was afforded on Sunday last for an exchange of views between the leaders of European financial centres on the international situation, and the necessary support was arranged in order to inspire confidence in Berlin and to prevent nervousness elsewhere from developing into anything like panic. In the first half of the week the excitement seemed to have died down, but on Thursday Brussels was stricken with an acute attack of nerves, which soon infected the other financial centres.

This subdued crisis is almost unique inasmuch as all the important stock markets of the world are seriously affected by it. The unsettlement is due partly to fears regarding the Morocco negotiations and partly to purely financial causes. Perhaps the best way of expressing it is that the uncertain political situation has exposed or accentuated financial weakness. Germany is suffering from a heavy slump consequent upon over-extended speculation and industrial development based on borrowed money; New York is experiencing a reaction due to disappointment in financial circles regarding the crops and the slow trade revival, and accentuated by anti-capital legislation; Paris is disturbed by indigestion through swallowing an over-supply of American and other foreign securities; and the London market, in addition to having underwritten too many partially unsaleable new issues, have been discommoded by heavy depreciation in investment values and by labour disruption.

In international banking circles it is declared that the Morocco negotiations have not been a source of financial anxiety, and this statement is supported by the evidence of the money market, which is a much more reliable

index to the international situation than are the stock markets. It is true that France has withdrawn a considerable proportion of her business loans from Germany, but these withdrawals are attributable directly to engagements entered into on the other side of the Atlantic, and although the Agadir incident may have suggested to French bankers that they should call on Berlin rather than go elsewhere for the funds required, the loan movement does not necessarily bear a sensational interpretation. If Berlin had made heavy withdrawals from Lombard Street there would have been reason for suspecting political trouble, but the financial transactions between Berlin and London have been practically normal since the Morocco negotiations began. If the position of the stock markets of the world were sounder the Morocco affair would have very little effect, but in present conditions dealers are easily frightened by shadows.

The outcome of the fortnightly settlement on the Stock Exchange has been awaited with interest. In the middle of the week it was expected that failures would be avoided, but the outbreak of selling from Brussels revived fears of trouble. It is understood that some brokers have been "let in" by important clients, and the liquidation of sound investment securities, such as railway prior charges, suggested that heroic measures were being taken in some quarters to meet differences. Rumours were also freely circulated that two Stock Exchange firms were being "assisted over the settlement". What truth there is in the reports it is difficult to say; probably there is a substratum of fact upon which a good deal of exaggeration has been built. Business has reached the lowest possible ebb on the Stock Exchange, and as long as these uncertainties last there is little prospect of fresh commitments being entered upon.

Home rails have naturally felt the effects of renewed liquidation, which neither high interest yields nor improving traffics have power to offset. Except in the case of North-Westerns, which show a gross gain of £21,000 for last week, the returns are not quite so good as might have been expected, but there are hopes that the losses caused by the strike may be regained before the end of the year. Meanwhile new labour troubles are in the air, though no serious fears are entertained.

The collapse in Berlin has caused a further heavy decline in Canadian Pacifics, and Hudson's Bays have also suffered in company with other stocks such as Grand Trunks, which were favoured by German speculators. As regards Americans, it is impossible to judge how much of the decline is due to Continental liquidation and how much to Wall Street bear operations, but the failure of a fairly important New York firm indicates that the position on the other side of the Atlantic is not at all clear. Every department of the Stock Exchange is affected by the prevailing depression, and the only gleam of sunshine to be discerned at the moment is the fact that the heavy liquidation at the various centres has strengthened the technical position to such a degree that when the Morocco affair is settled a recovery should be due, even though it may be impeded by the supply of bankrupt stock which has yet to find a permanent home.

INSURANCE.

THE NORTH BRITISH AND MERCANTILE.

MOST of the leading insurance companies of the present day are more or less the result of amalgamations with other offices, and the North British and Mercantile Insurance Company is no exception to a very general rule. During the one hundred odd years this famous corporation has existed—it began operations in 1809—quite a dozen businesses have been absorbed, and some of the transactions have been sufficiently important to influence materially the fortunes of the company. More than sixty years ago the North British—the parent undertaking—acquired the connexions of

the Morayshire Insurance Company, and in 1859 the company took over the old Newcastle Fire Office, which had been founded in 1783; three years later the boards of the Mercantile Fire and United Kingdom Life Companies surrendered their independence, and in 1865 the Volunteer Service Insurance Company was similarly engulfed. Then, after a lapse of years, the Scottish Provincial was taken over in 1889, the Universal Life in 1901, the Ocean Marine in 1907, and the Railway Passengers' Assurance Company in 1910.

These various absorptions doubtless added considerably to the premium income and the consequence of the company, but it can truthfully be said that the extraordinary growth of its revenues since 1862, when the North British and Mercantile Companies joined hands and the present title was adopted, has mainly resulted from the enterprising policy pursued by the management, who never seem to have missed a favourable opportunity to make headway in any part of the world. Both at home and abroad the North British and Mercantile has always been a favourite of the insuring classes, and latterly all departments have been particularly well supported. A quinquennium ended on 31 December last, and during its course the net fire premiums received amounted to £10,729, and compared with £9,188,767 in the preceding term. An increase of about 17 per cent. in the quinquennial premium income clearly proves that the popularity of the fire department has increased in recent years, notwithstanding the competition which has now to be faced. Since the new century began important changes have occurred in the fire insurance world, and many small offices, both here and elsewhere, have developed into serious business rivals.

The life department of the company has also more than held its own. Between 1905 and 1910 the net life premium income increased from £950,056 to £1,107,569, while the new business of the last two years of the recent valuation term compared most favourably with the results obtained in 1904 and 1905. In those years the net sums assured amounted to £3,801,224, and the new premiums to £167,005, whereas the more recent record was £4,530,297 and £208,937 respectively. Like other old offices which operate their life business at a moderate cost and regularly pay good bonuses to their participating policyholders, the North British now experiences some difficulty in obtaining in this country the amount of support required for the continuance of its career of steady expansion, but the management have in this respect been most successful, and all colonial extensions have been wisely made.

Although the company transacts a substantial business outside of the United Kingdom, its expenditure is limited to about 13½ per cent. of the net premiums it receives, and policyholders do well. Reversionary bonuses are allotted on the "compound" principle—namely, on sums assured and previous bonuses—and at each of the last six distributions of profits the minimum rate per cent. per annum declared for North British and Mercantile policies was as follows:—1886, £1 9s.; 1891, £1 9s.; 1896, £1 6s.; 1901, £1 8s.; 1906, £1 8s.; and 1911, £1 10s. The present bonus constitutes a record, so far as the recent history of the company is concerned, and the good fortune of the shareholders and policyholders seems to have been due to several causes—notably increased new business, diminished expenditure, favourable mortality, and an improvement in the average rate of interest earned. It must not, however, be overlooked that the great expansion of the surplus was partly due to the restoration to the life fund of a sum of £200,000 which had previously been placed to investment depreciation account, and was no longer required for such purpose. But even when allowance is made for this fact it is manifest that the prosperity of the business was fully maintained throughout the recent quinquennium, and there is apparently no reason to anticipate less favourable results in the period which has now been entered upon.

AMERICAN AND OTHER FOREIGN MUSIC.

BY JOHN F. RUNCIMAN.

AN indication that the taste for opera is spreading in England is the advent of the American speculator. He sees that the ground has been broken and the seed sown; and now he is preparing to reap what there may be in the way of harvest. Whether this will come up to his expectations cannot be guessed yet; but I don't believe that Mr. Quinlan will get much of the Moody-Manners or Carl Rosa following, and I am perfectly certain that the Covent Garden fashionable crowd will not be attracted to the new opera-house in Kingsway—not even by the bust of the proprietor which is said to ornament its exterior. It is significant that none of these American plungers mean to plunge into anything fresh; they mean to keep to the well-trodden path; though I suppose they will presently fall to squabbling over anything by Massenet or Puccini that seems likely to prove a catch. As for a Strauss opera, that goose was killed a couple of seasons ago for the sake of its golden eggs. Because "Elektra" drew so well when Mr. Thomas Beecham's company first played it, it was given so often that the whole Strauss public was, so to speak, used up. Mr. Beecham's last Covent Garden season showed the amount of wisdom there was in this policy. As one who had formed a low opinion of "Elektra" and also of "Salomé" I wished for nothing better; but I don't know that Strauss liked the result nor that Mr. Beecham anticipated it. However, we are not threatened at present with any of these masterpieces of undramatic opera. Puccini and other of the more popular composers will be scrambled and contended for; and probably the repertoires and general artistic level of the performances will be about the same at all the theatres where opera is given. American managers have improved English drama until it doesn't know itself; and now the paragraphs in the daily papers will soon be telling us how much they are doing for opera.

It is not surprising that the American impresarios do not propose giving us any American operas. There are American composers—hundreds of them; and I have looked over the scores of several American operas which were every whit as good music as anything written by Puccini and infinitely better than the rubbish of Mascagni or the incoherent stuff with which Leoncavallo is at present entertaining Hippodrome audiences. The only defect I could see in the American works I have looked at is one common to all American music—it might be anyone's music, music of any nationality save American. In music American composers seem to adopt, deliberately to adopt, a nationality: it seems to depend upon the country they study in, or, oftener, upon the country where their masters studied. I can tell by a glance at an American composition whether its author—or its author's teacher—was trained in Paris or in Germany, and if in Germany whether with an old-fashioned pundit of Leipzig or with Humperdinck or one of his disciples. One never sees anything distinctively American: in fact one never sees anything individual: any individuality, that is, recognisable in the music is not the composer's but the composer's master's. This seems odd. The Americans have, I am told, produced fine painters; and besides one or two first-rate, genuine literary men they have produced a large number of very excellent imitations: their painting and literature are stamped with their own character: yet the moment they try their hands on music they stamp it with somebody else's character. Some American musicians, indeed, are veritable chameleons: they seem able to write in any style they are asked for; but men of this type are not confined to America: every country and race produces them in shoals. This lack of character in American music accounts for the utter ineffectiveness of their music, however good in its way, when one has listened to it for longer than ten minutes. An opera occupying a whole evening, or even half an evening, would be unendurable. However poor stuff the music of Leoncavallo and Mascagni may be, it is at any rate their own:

they do not copy each other (though Puccini copies them both).

At the Promenade concert on Wednesday night we had a fair specimen of the best American music. Macdowell was certainly the most highly gifted musician who has come of the American people; and I am curious to know—never having seen a biography of him—whether he was of Irish or Scottish descent and how long his family had been settled in the United States. I had not the good fortune to meet him when he paid his last visit to London not long before his death, and I never heard him play the piano; but competent friends tell me he was a brilliant player and played, moreover, like a musician, which is what many brilliant players cannot do. I can well believe it. His music shows him to have been a musician to the finger tips; and he had a fine, rigorous training under old Raff and other teachers of note. His end was tragic; but he managed to get a large quantity of music out of himself before his health gave way. In a sense it is masterly music; he dared to write anything he liked and made unsparing use of unusual progressions when he felt them to be right, yet his writing was always smooth and every note was in just the right place. He had poetic feeling; he felt life deeply; its joys and griefs and its beauty were never absent from his mind when he composed; and yet—! He had every quality that a great composer must possess save genius. He rarely moves one. The music indicates what he was feeling and thinking, but he never communicates his thought and his emotion: seldom in any of his works known to me do I hear the voice of the true Macdowell as I know Macdowell must have been. In many men of supreme talent there seems to be no magic channel by which the soul pours itself into and shapes the music, inevitably and with absolute veracity. Macdowell was in this case, and perforce composition to him was more or less guess-work; he had no touchstone by which to test his music: there was no channel from the soul to the music and therefore none by which the music could directly speak to the soul: he had to make the best of matters and trust that the music did more or less really express what he felt: his music was no more intimate to him than the music of another composer, and I fancy that its effect upon him was largely due to association of ideas. That is, being in a certain state of mind when he invented certain strains; when he heard those strains played by association of ideas they threw him again into the same state of mind. Constantly he came very close to the true thing: there are numerous passages in his work which strike me as expressing with perfect fidelity the thing he meant; but he rarely keeps it up for long. Perhaps the magic channel opened for moments and closed again; perhaps these inspired bars were only the result of luck; but, whatever the reason, the false touch is sure to succeed the apparently inspired passage. Had he written one single work from beginning to end as fine and true as his best bits he would stand very high indeed amongst the great composers.

These best bits are Macdowell and are the only American music I know: his work as a whole, or any one composition, is American only in the sense of being composed by an American, and like the bulk of such music it reflects the influences under which he acquired his art. His piano concerto, beautifully played by Mr. George Rathbone the other night, is a delightful thing: it is long and at times threatens to become monotonous, but invariably these flat periods are cut short by one of the genuine, expressive, often magnificent Macdowell touches. A great deal is Mendelssohn curiously modified by more advanced, even Wagnerian, influences; but still, it is all fine music and I am grateful to Sir Henry Wood for putting it on his programme and to Mr. Rathbone for the superb manner in which he played it.

A piece I had not heard before was a Roumanian rhapsody by Georges Enesco. It is the sort of music that one need not write. There are plenty of good strokes in the scoring, but, after all, everyone scores well nowadays—everyone, of course, except the old

Academic gang, who stick piously to their text books. It is pleasing and served its purpose as a sort of interlude. After the Macdowell concerto the "Tod und Verklärung" of Strauss was played, very smoothly—perhaps too smoothly—and with more beauty of tone than I have heard from the Queen's Hall orchestra for many, many days. In Mozart's glorious E flat symphony there was also beauty of tone, though we could have done with a little more of it in the slow movement. It was a fine rendering, unmarred by affectations; and I am glad to be able to say so much after all that Sir Henry's recent caprices have compelled me to say.

"THE OGRE."

BY JOHN PALMER.

FEW are yet sufficiently level with the age to give up the old-fashioned habit of having advanced ideas. Advanced ideas are as old as Ibsen and as orthodox as Mr. Shaw. Suffragettes were once a novelty, and the flaunted colours of the W.S.P.U. terrified every decent citizen with an immediate prospect of revolution and a broken home. These, now, are unhappy, far-off things. Suffragettes are as respectable and as old-fashioned to-day as the lodger franchise. They are discussed in Parliament and dealt with in a bill which has been promised "facilities" by a Prime Minister who was at Balliol in the seventies. The suffragette is just one terrible instance of Nemesis.

Happily, however, it is not for everyone to keep pace with the rapid march of the prophets. For the great majority Ibsen and Mr. Shaw, out-of-date though they be, are still the last word in emancipation: children are still a problem and a menace, bent on throwing down the "tyranny of the obsolete"; wives must still be carefully handled or they will be banging the front door upon hearth and home. It is impossible for any but the fleetest wits to be level with the times. No one valuing health or sanity would seriously attempt it. Is it modern to be friendly with one's own father?—or is the "advanced" condition a domestic state of siege? Is filial respect again in vogue, the latest thing in the latest Scandinavian play?—or does one, as the latest thing, despise one's father? May one, as a mere affectionate parent, or as a simple husband solicitous for the comfort and solvency of one's home, claim as of right the affection and dutiful care of children or wife, or is the claim rejected by the most recent authorities as brutal oppression of the free young mind, or as stupid impertinence of the male? Again, if wives should wish to abandon their husbands, are the husbands by the latest rules of the game expected to put down heavy feet and bolt the door?—or should they generously help their truant wives to a possible higher realisation of themselves? Is it, on the showing of the most recent prophets, creditable to be in the Shakespearean sense a natural mother?—or is this no longer virtuous? Should the similarly natural father repair his fault, taking the very old-fashioned way of honour?—or would this be in him a disgraceful and unnecessary act of weakness as in the little less old-fashioned days of the Court Theatre? These are problems for an expert. Only the really expert could in the simplest circumstances behave correctly and in the most approved modern manner. The ordinary intelligent citizen attempting to be really advanced would merely succeed in being really out-of-breath. The pace is too dreadful: only the professionals can keep it up. To this circumstance more than another we owe the stability of our wonderful social order. Before one generation of advanced ideas is sufficiently well established to be a serious menace to society another generation is destroying the first. Before Ibsen, the feminist, has had time to break up the home, Strindberg, the brutalist, has demolished Ibsen, and the home is safe. Meantime paterfamilias earns money and pays income tax, blissfully unconscious of either.

Yes; undoubtedly it is very difficult in a world that

changes so rapidly to know what is really and truly modern. Happily things are a little simpler in the theatre. There, at any rate, Suffragettes and "advanced" ideas about marriage and the subjection of parents still pass as modern. Fathers, husbands and householders who pay income tax, and have something to lose, are still dubious of Ibsen. Though the pioneers of morality may even now be glimpsing the vision of a world where the children of a future age inflamed with filial piety will respect and cherish their Ibsene fathers by main force, it is now assumed for dramatic purposes that a father and a husband must be a very strong, tactful, and wideawake person to obtain any respect or cherishing at all. At any rate it does not do to neglect one's family, as Nicholas Fawsitt discovered at the S. James' Theatre on Monday evening. Nicholas Fawsitt was so deeply occupied in making money on the Stock Exchange for his second wife to spend that he forgot all about Ibsen and the Suffragettes and the terrible new morality which was giving birth to Mr. Paradine's Marriage For Five Years' Society. Fortunately there was a slump or something equally recondite happening to Mr. Fawsitt's stocks, and he was compelled to retire for a few months. While Mrs. Fawsitt was thinking of a Japanese ball, and a week-end house in the country, Mr. Fawsitt was deciding to live on next to nothing—a mere £100 a year or so—and, what was worse, of spending most of his time at home. Immediately we have the spectacle of an Ogre taming his pretty, extravagant and selfish little wife into something tolerable and human. Nor is this all our Ogre is called upon to do. There are the children. Bertie has to be cured of a dreadful music-hall woman, and to be sent to plant apple-trees in Canada. Sylvia has to be persuaded to go back to school, from which she has disobediently run away. Lilian has to be cured of writing sensational and notorious novels on a subject of which an Ogre's daughter should be respectably ignorant. But the Ogre is equal to his task, and the common verdict at the end is that no more sweet, delightful, affectionate and wonderful Ogre ever lived than the Ogre of Paunder's Green. Certainly he deserved a better family. Most certainly he did wonders with the family he had.

The play is amusing; but it is not Mr. Henry Arthur Jones at his best. Everything in a play of this kind depends on brilliant writing—the witty phrase, a smooth, swift and practised touch in the moulding of dialogue and situation, with every now and again some happy glimpse clean into the heart of our human comedy—these things are not the decorations, they are the essentials of a play of this type. Mr. Jones has more than once given us plays of the kind unequalled since the comedies of Oscar Wilde. Beside them "The Ogre" is disappointing. The writing and workmanship are only seldom brilliant, or even smooth. What was lacking in the play had to be redeemed in the acting. There were long scenes where the play must have utterly dropped had it not been for the brilliant acting of Sir George Alexander, who read wonderful shades of irony into passages where the writing was quite commonplace. The art of Sir George Alexander in passages where irony must be conveyed by gesture or intonation independently of the author's words is one of the best things in English acting to-day. His dexterity is sometimes too baffling to be conveyed by mere description. One naturally demands of an actor that he should be able to act. It is a step further to ask him to act that he is acting. But Sir George Alexander can go even further. I have seen him act that he is acting; and let you see at the same time that his acting of the second degree is not after all unqualified by sincerity. In fact when he acts that he is acting; he is not really acting that he acts. I am not sure I altogether know what I mean; but I am quite sure that I have seen Sir George Alexander do it.

THE THREE ROADS.

BY FILSON YOUNG.

I.

OF the three great roads on which men move about the world—the iron road, the stone road, and the road of water—each has its special character, its special associations of fancy that we call romance. In France, especially, where the three are of almost equal importance, their difference of character is specially marked. Not so very long ago, indeed, they could have been distinguished with some accuracy by the kind of people who used them. The rivers and canals were the roads of merchandise; the stone roads, once the roads of armies, were the roads of the peasant; and the iron road was the road of the stranger and the traveller. It is different now. The motor-car has restored to the country roads their original purpose of long-distance communication; the French people themselves now travel extensively throughout their own country on the railroads; and only the rivers and canals continue to bear their ancient burden of merchandise. Near my village these three great roads run for a space almost side by side through the valley of the Seine; for it was the waters that first found a road for man's footsteps, and it is the course of the waters that these other roads still principally follow. But the Seine runs slow and sleepy here; the national road, although according to the sign-board it runs from Paris to Marseilles, leads for us only to the town of Moret, less than two miles away, and the chief road here is the road of iron.

It springs suddenly out of the forest, with a sweeping importance, upon our hillside of little houses and vine-covered walls. It is much the most important thing in our world. The station is almost as big as the village, and of far greater importance, for the two main lines of the P.L.M. branch here, one to travel gloriously down the valleys of the Saône and the Rhône to Marseilles, the other, the Bourbonnais line, to wander off by the Loing and the Yonne to far-away Clermont-Ferrand and the Cévennes. On one hand is the curve into the forest; on the other the spreading expanse of the station and the grass-grown goods-yard, the buildings, the tall row of poplars, the signals, and all the intricate circumstance of an important junction. One set of lines leads straight as far as the eye can see, and disappears in a trembling haze of heat; the other branches away, held aloft by a great curving viaduct that leads it to the Seine.

To the English eye there must always be something a little odd about the appearance of a French railway. Like all commercial machinery in France it has an unfinished air; it is entirely practical and efficient, but it lacks that wonderful solidity and finish which marks the English railroad, and which is expressed in the words "permanent way". The iron road in England, and all its circumstances and belongings, seem designed to last for ever. It is weeded and graveled like a garden path, the grasses of its embankments cut and reaped in their due season, its hedges clipped, its signal-posts painted and constructed with a careful uniformity, its fences maintained like those of an English park, its walls and buttresses like those of a garrison castle. In France the way is grown often with grasses and weeds, and flowers come to bloom from under the very rails, and pass their fragrant life within an inch of destruction. The way is not sacred as it is in England; you may walk across it and upon it from one platform to another. The signals have an agreeable variety of form and feature. There are large inquiring discs of red or mauve or yellow or blue, with an eccentric glass eye within their circumference; there are semaphores that invite the passage of trains not by the air of acquiescence, chin sunk on chest, of the English signal, but by utter and perpendicular collapse; and there are great squeaking squares of sheet-iron that rattle in the wind and turn cumbrously on their pivots.

There is a bridge over the line, a little bridge belonging to a little road that leads from one small village on the slope to another smaller village on the plain; and

everyone who passes over the bridge, men with baskets of fruit or bundles of sticks, women with loads of linen for washing in the river, children on various errands and enterprises, they all stop and stare up and down the line. They wait until at least one train has passed ; they follow it with their eyes until it has disappeared in the hazy distance, or been swallowed up in the forest, and then take up their burdens and pass on.

What is the fascination in railways that begins with earliest childhood and, at any rate with people who retain an agreeable curiosity about life, never quite ceases ? Is it an inheritance from the wonder of a century ago, when they seemed to revolutionise human life, or is it something more subtle and inherent in themselves ? There is always for the human being, who walks on legs, a certain fascination for things that go on wheels or in water ; but that is not by any means the chief fascination of the railway, for no other vehicle, not even a ship, excites the universal interest that is accorded to the locomotive engine. Nor can it be the fact that a railway train is a kind of microcosm of life, a house or a town that flees swiftly from one part of the earth to another, containing chairs, and lights, and carpets, and fires, and kitchens, and beds. The ship contains all these things, and is in this sense, and indeed in every sense, a far more wonderful thing than a train ; but you either have or have not a natural interest in ships, whereas everyone has a natural interest in trains. Probably the secret lies in the fact that, from our first experience to our last, they are associated with the most physically adventurous acts of our life, and with the great spiritual adventures also which result from our being transported from one environment to another. All life and all adventure were contained in our first railway journeys, when every minute gave us something new to learn, and know, and feel ; and for life and adventure the railway still stands, even with people whose first little burst of curiosity in life is soon exhausted, and who cease to grow and to live as soon as they can come to a safe anchorage and commit the spiritual suicide known as " settling down ". And the French railways stand, certainly to foreigners, for very wonderful and beautiful experiences, for by those iron roads they go to Spain, to Switzerland, to the Mediterranean, to Italy, to Egypt, to India. Even if you are going no farther than Paris there is something very inspiring in the sight at Calais of the carriages labelled with such romantic and far-away names ; something thrilling, at midnight on Friday, in the long and lighted splendour of the P. and O. express, and at three o'clock on any afternoon between June and October in the aspect in the same place of the Oberland-Simplon express, with its inspiring row of labels : Paris, Lausanne, Brigue, Milan, Venice, Trieste, Berne, and Interlaken ; and something magnificent in the train that leaves Calais every Thursday afternoon, and bears the astounding title of the Calais-Marseilles-Bombay express. And the myriad associations that these names call up in the minds of thousands and thousands of people are definitely linked also with the iron road in France, and with an unbroken line of experience that begins there by the green waterside of Calais, and that ends, who shall say where ?

LETTERS FROM WILDER SPAIN.

BY WILLOUGHBY VERNER.

A MYSTERIOUS CAVE—I.

ON a brilliantly fine morning in January some few years ago I was riding through a sierra in Southern Andalusia. I had been out in quest of eagles' nesting stations, and the expedition had included a peculiarly miserable night in a farmhouse in a remote valley. By one of those mischances which are the inevitable fate now and again of those who elect to wander amid these desolate hills, we had been benighted and were only too glad to obtain shelter, primitive as were our quarters, the alternative being a bivouac in the open with the thermometer well below zero.

The cause of our temporary misfortune was due to

one of the physical peculiarities of the terrain we were exploring. Amid these limestone mountains it now and again happens that a stream after running vigorously for several miles suddenly disappears into some subterranean abyss, to emerge from some cavern perhaps miles distant on the far side of a mountain. The inconvenience of the habit to the casual explorer can only be realised by those who have travelled amid such mountains where roads are non-existent and bridle and cattle tracks alike evasive and uncertain. On such occasions I have sometimes followed the downward course of a mountain stream on the chance of striking some rough track adjacent to it and with the reasonable hope that the stream, after the manner of its kind, may eventually run into some valley through which a well-defined track may lead once again to civilisation. On the day in question we had, after a ride along mountain tracks, struck a stream running west towards a mass of broken hills which seemed suitable for the object of our quest. The afternoon sun, shining full on their flank, outlined sharply some steep cliffs and dark ravines which, to our imagination, must surely provide suitable nesting stations for the birds we sought.

The day was extremely cold for Andalusia, an abnormally hard frost during the preceding night had bound the whole sierra in iron, for we were between two and three thousand feet above the sea.

Such indeed had been the severity of the frost during the night that all the pools along the course of the stream we followed were frozen hard, the ice being strong enough to bear a man's weight. Our mule-driver, a man of the plains, had never before seen ice that would bear, and was amazed when he found he could stand on it and look down through its crystal surface at the various objects lying at the bottom of the pools. Another of our party, a goat-herd, born and bred in the sierras, was not a whit less excited at the unusual event, and the two of them were playing like children, making vigorous attempts to run and slide, attempts which invariably ended in the most appalling falls which were apparently only rendered harmless by the thickness of their skulls.

Our stream after skirting the foot of a great natural escarpment of cliffs led into a grassy amphitheatre below some pinnacle crags, heaped in wild confusion. Much to our surprise, it here joined another smaller stream coming from exactly the opposite direction. The united streams then ran for a few yards southward and incontinently disappeared into a chasm at the base of the escarpment. Here also the rough track we had been following ended, and it was evident that we had reached a cul-de-sac. It was impossible to get any further. True, an ill-defined cattle track led off northward, but in that direction the country was useless for our purposes ; hills without crags or cliffs merging into lower ground which led to the open country beyond. After examining the cliffs we had reached, we decided to look out for some place to pass the night. No dwellings were in sight, not even the humble thatched " chosa " of a resident goat-herd, so we were compelled to retrace our steps and glad enough to have the good luck to reach, just before it fell dark, the extremely dilapidated farmstead already mentioned. Here we cooked our evening meal from our small stock of rations and passed a night of more than usual discomfort lying on dirty planks and vowing for the hundredth time never again to venture into unexplored districts without a camp bed.

Very early next morning we sallied from our unpleasant quarters and made for a gorge we had passed the day before and which our goat-herd assured us would lead to the point we now wished to make. The track we followed lay through one of the highest passes of this part of the sierra, about 4000 feet above the sea. As we ascended, the cork, ilex, and algarrobo trees became fewer and fewer till we entered a perfect wilderness of grey rocks, where trees, save an occasional stunted wild olive, were non-existent and the grass and herbage could barely find sustenance in the small patches of soil between the fissured rocks around us. The cold was intense, the wind blew straight from the snow-clad Sierra Nevada in the far distant north-east, the air we

breathed seemed to be peculiarly rarefied, far more so than our actual altitude warranted.

On every side of us the sharp-cut stony summits of the sierra shut in our view, whilst overhead was a cloudless sky of steel blue. The silence was intense save that now and again the cheery call of the chough, so reminiscent of our homely jackdaw's voice, sounded with startling shagginess as one of these wily birds dipped round the angle of a rocky height and disappeared from view. The only other sound was the click of the mules' hoofs as their plodding owners picked their way along the narrow track littered with loose fragments of rock weathered from the adjacent steep hill-sides. Our usually loquacious attendants were driven to silence; they were, as is so commonly the case, miserably clothed in light linen jackets, and beyond a heartfelt ejaculation at regular intervals of "Qué frío!" with immense emphasis on the first word, they made no attempt at conversation. Later on, after we had crossed the highest point and were descending into a big valley beyond, the afternoon sun put some warmth into us, also we were sheltered from the keen wind, and our satellites recommenced their usual discursive remarks one to another. It was now that by pure chance I heard one of them say that we were not far from the "cueva", the cavern, with "the writings on the walls".

Now cave exploration has ever attracted me from the days of my earliest childhood when I was taken to Banwell Cave in Somerset and given some bones of extinct animals. It was this instinct which led me many years later to fathom the depths of S. Michael's Cave, Gibraltar, the so-called bottomless pit which provided the fabled passage under sea for the original Barbary apes, so I listened to the muleteer's prattle and the local goat-herd's description of the cave in question. From these I gathered that only a few miles from where we were there was a big cavern, on the walls of which were many "letras"—inscriptions. My curiosity was naturally excited and I questioned the narrator of the story, a very intelligent mountaineer who had been my attendant on many expeditions, and who I knew could both read and write—with limitations. My first question, naturally enough, was whether the inscriptions were in Spanish or Moorish character, for the latter is known, by sight, to many Andalusians. At once I got the sharp reply: "In neither". I then strove to explain that although the "letras" might be unknown to my excellent friends of the sierras, other people might be able to decipher them. This led to an emphatic shake of both the forefinger and head, that expressive negation of these folk, and a severe retort. "I tell you, no man can read these 'letras'. It's true. Many have tried. It cannot be done. It is impossible". This brought matters to a crisis and I demanded an explanation, from which I gathered the following tale.

Some time during the previous year or a year before, for on this point my informant was rather vague, a goat-herd and mountain cultivator of the sparse soil was climbing the crags and exploring the fissures and caves where numerous bats congregate, in quest of guano for his small vineyard. He had chanced on a narrow tunnel, only just large enough to allow of a man crawling on his stomach to pass through, which led into an immense cave, on the walls of which were hundreds of "letras", all in an unknown script. The fame of the discovery had spread among his comrades and had reached the adjacent villages, and men had flocked to the spot—not to read the "letras"—but—in search of "tesoro", hidden treasure! Among these were some well-educated men, and none of them, no, not one, could decipher a single one of these mysterious "letras". I should mention that throughout Andalusia, which abounds in relics of the Moorish and Roman occupations, a perfect mania exists for treasure-seeking. In my many years of wanderings in the least explored districts, often when climbing some difficult and remote crags, I have come across such remains, as well as others, probably Carthaginian, Phoenician,

or absolutely pre-historic in their origin. Constantly these ancient remains bear clear evidence of modern excavation and ruthless destruction. The country folk with me have invariably explained that some party of foolish people from an adjacent town have been at work seeking for "buried treasure", and that it is their rough work which has damaged or destroyed so many interesting archaeological relics of the past. Needless to say, my imagination was fired by the prospect of visiting such a marvellous spot, and I decided to abandon my present quest and go there at once. Here I was met by the unanswerable reply that although the cavern lay but a few miles from our track, as the crow (or rather the chough) flies, to reach it meant a good half-day's ride along the only practicable mule-track. I was told that of course if I wanted to stop out another night it could be done. But there was no place near it where we could stop, and no food to be got. As I was due elsewhere on the following day, I reluctantly abandoned the idea for the time and decided to return to the district and visit the mysterious cave at the earliest possible date, at any rate within a few weeks. As events turned out, very many months, running into years, passed before I was able to reach the much desired spot.

THE IRON-WAY FOLK.

TRANSLATION OF A LETTER FROM AHMED EL KERKULI
IN LONDON TO SHAYKH MIJUEL IBN FARIS (GROOM).

After Compliments.

THE Armenian Hagopian who brought the mares for the English military officer fled to America yesterday without paying me my wages. His father lives in a village near Ain el Beda—I do not know the name of the village—it is half an hour's horseman's ride from Bartalla and has a white minaret. His father holds a debt of Bero Agha of the Girgiri people; when the Girgiri move at autumn they will pass through your grazing and my mother was a woman of the Girgiri. Tell Bero Agha his debt is now paid and that he owes nothing to the father of Hagopian. I am coming home in a steamer which sails in two weeks. An Afghan named Nasrullah Khan, student in one of the schools, gave me money to buy a ticket; he gave me his name and the house where he lives, when I return I am to give the English Consul at Mosul money and he will send it by post.

This country is in a "mix up". The people are very lazy and have no taste for work—the food is cheap and there is much money, the gentle people have much money but the common people have very little because they spend it on expensive drink—the wind here makes men very drunken and the water is bad and heavy. I am always drunk in this country; God willing I shall lose this drinking sickness when I return.

The people are of three kinds, lords, merchants, and common people—the lords are good horsemen and give to the poor, they have many servants who are fat and rude and drink much beer. The merchants are very rich but do not give money, and have not many servants; the merchants are robbers and have no confidence in one another, when a merchant here lends another merchant money he asks the Government to bear witness, and puts all on paper. The lords are honest, for when they stake money on horses even with low-born persons at the horse races, they do it by word. The common people are all very lazy; they can work well but do not like work, also they always desire alms as do our people; but these alms they ask not for the love of God, but demand out of the Government's purse as a right—they are very foolish and do not trust one another. The Shaykhs of the folk who work on the iron way did eight days ago forbid all work on the iron way because they said the folk had not enough money to buy bread and meat for their children as well as strong drink for themselves, and in the wind of this climate as I said this drink is necessary.

So the iron way had been stopped but for some of the iron way folk who did not heed the word of their Shaykhs. These people had stones thrown at them

by murderers and robbers from the prisons, because the iron way folk have no arrangement by which they themselves could privately slay those who did not attend to the order of the Shaykhs, because there is no more trust between the iron way folk and their own Shaykhs than there is between the merchants.

The Government sent all the soldiers to guard the iron way against the people from the prisons. The people from the prisons had very little fear of the soldiers but it is said that some were killed by them—the soldiers were very small but had good guns, their officers were very fine men, sons of lords and like lions; one of these spoke to me as Egyptians speak, and gave me tobacco, but he would not tell me anything of his affair with the prison folk.

After three days the Government said it would send certain judges to judge about the money for the iron way folk, between the Shaykhs and the merchants to whom the iron way belongs. So before anything was given them the iron way folk went back to work cursing yet their Shaykhs as traitors. The Shaykhs in turn cursed the Government judges to make the iron way folk believe that they were strong. Who can judge between such men? The iron way folk have no confidence in their Shaykhs, the merchants have no confidence in one another and the Government is afraid of killing the people from the prisons.

The lords who are military officers are now only servants of the Government, and do as they are told and can give no orders. I think soon that there will be more "mix ups" in this country—but it is very rich and it will take many "mix ups" like this to make it poor.

Your brother, AHMED.

SHAKESPEARE AS HUMORALIST.

BY FANNY CHESTERMAN.

SHAKESPEARE'S profound skill in psychology is generally accepted. Has, however, the science whereby his knowledge was ordered been enough discussed? Much is inferred of his "heart-lore", of his "intuition". Has any stress been laid on Humoral Pathology as the informing principle of his creative art?

It may be argued that since Shakespeare is justified of his psychology there is small need to follow it by way of an obsolete creed. Yet forceful allusion is lost, subtle inference is wasted, much may be misunderstood if we neglect to interpret the teacher's mind by the teaching of his age. The doctrine of humours, be it said, alone gives true value to Hamlet's alienation or to Iago's temperament.

It has been objected to our thesis that, if knowledge of the physico-psychological effects of the Four Humours be necessary to the full understanding of Shakespeare's art, how comes it that few references to that doctrine are made by his earliest commentators? The reason is not to seek. Shakespeare who, perhaps, more than all men profited by that science in his art of human knowledge was himself "almost forgotten", and "wholly misunderstood" for so many years after his death as sufficed to put the old wisdom also out of mind. The physico-psychology that informs "Tamburlane", that is the soul of Jonson's work, of Fletcher's, and of Ford's, sank from its place on the reformations that followed the "invention" of the circulation of the blood. The immemorial doctrine of "Four Humours", that Paracelsus' laughter and denial could scarcely shake, fell like a house of cards at the breath of the spirit of progress, and once discredited it quickly became forgotten.

In Shakespeare's age the former wisdom was at its zenith. It approached an obsession. Prince or peasant took its cant, at least, upon his lips. Jonson says: "If an idiot have but an apish, or fantastic strain it is his humour". And Ford concurs: "A collier being drunk jostled a knight into the kennel, and cried 't was his humour; the knight broke his coxcomb, and that was his humour"—as though the very fervour of knowledge must throw up froth of affectation.

At the same time the actual language of pathology was used everywhere, in season and out of season, under authority of Hippocrates, Galen, Avicen, Averroes. The empiric would scarcely give pass to the doctor and, broadly speaking, no gentleman then but was, more or less, empiric. Falstaff is made to discourse of the features of the King's illness in the impatient ear of the Lord Chief Justice, having "read the cause of his (the illness) effects in Galen"; but only Falstaff's peculiar relations with his "good lord" made the subject out of taste. Simonides marking Pericles, melancholy, bloodless, wasted, at the Royal Banquet must drink to him a humoral toast: "Wishing it (the red wine) so much blood unto your life". Cæsar, in bidding Octavia farewell, desired "The elements (in analogy with the humours) be kind to thee and make Thy spirits all of comfort"; which was, as Dr. Johnson recognised, the humoral way of wishing good health and good spirits. Yet, "it is more probable", comments Knight in his century's forgetfulness of humoral principles, "that the poet only intended that Cæsar should wish his sister a propitious voyage". It were easy to multiply passages bearing on the familiar use of pathological terms in that day. I will, however, quote but a single gem from Ford's "Love's Sacrifice", showing a lady's reason for refusing to witness a game at chess.

"Fiorunda. Madam, I must entreat excuse; I feel
The temper of my body not in case
To judge the strife".

In the period about 1550-1650 masques, plays, and emblems combined to mark the hey-day of the old pathology. At Court, in the Universities, in the town, were performed Masques of "Melancholy", Masques of the "Four Humours", Masques of the "Four Complexions", Masques of the "Four Elements". At table the gently born were served with viands designed especially to favour, or mitigate, the tendency of complexion; while amongst the "sotelties" or subtle emblems in mould that graced each course appeared often a group of the Humours, so disposed as to represent at once the four complexions and their analogies, the four seasons and the four ages of man.

In considering Shakespeare's exposition of the humoral habit of thought and speech obtaining in his age it is necessary to distinguish somewhat carefully the true from the corrupt use of the word "Humour". Humour as "moisture and fluxure" was a term for the fluids contained in the body: blood, choler, phlegm, and melancholy (or black bile). As one of these fluids predominated in the constitution of the individual, so was his bent, "temper", "complexion", "inclination", "condition"; and that both physically and mentally—interdependence of body and mind being assumed. Perfect balance in the humours assured a perfect man ("Julius Cæsar" A. v. s. 5). Yet, the predominance of one humour constituted necessarily no evil complexion. The sanguine man was not compelled to riot in pleasure because of the warmth of his blood, nor the choleric to commit violence through the bile in his blood. Only these humours called for government.

In Shakespeare's time the term "humour" came, not unfairly, to be extended to manners; manners showing men for what they are: the sanguine hopeful, the choleric quarrelsome, the phlegmatic heavy, the melancholy reserved. But beyond the term and its true extension there arose, as we have shown, certain "common or debauched forms" whose vogue declares positively the extraordinary rage for Humoralism that ruled all minds in the years immediately preceding its extinction.

First, perhaps, in interest comes the affectation of pathological melancholy by gallants, and would-be gallants, of fashion. Shakespeare mirrors this absurdity in the demeanour of certain of his lovers, in the personality of the "melancholy Jaques" and, anachronistically, in the bearing of the French comrades of Prince Arthur who would be "as sad as night, only

for wantonness". The vogue without doubt expressed homage to the learned and maiden monarch Elizabeth; for true melancholy was esteemed the natural humour of the student, and degenerate melancholy that of a perturbed lover. "It's your only fine humour, Sir", declares Master Matthew ("Every Man in his Humour", A. iii. s. 1), and he adds—in travesty of Aristotle as in anticipation of Pope—"Your true melancholy breeds your perfect fine wit, Sir". Thence, howsoever barren the effect it became a fine gentleman to "sit melancholy upon a stool", and "overflow you half a score, or a dozen of sonnets at a sitting".

For the apish affectation that was bred of humorous manners, it is sharply touched at by Shakespeare in the example of Corporal Nym, and by Jonson in Oliver Cob, a water-bearer.

Of the two pure spirits who essayed to cleanse their age, "these ignorant well-spoken days", by means of a moral medicine, Ben Jonson warred against folly, Shakespeare strove to strengthen virtue. The one from his sense of comedy "made sport with human follies"; the other from a sense of tragedy saw tears in human weakness, passion, crime. Both worked through the Humours. Jonson held up to ridicule the foolish manners of indisciplined humour, but Shakespeare in showing humour as the basis of character laid its tendencies under suspicion, and urged that the divine faculty of reason should be set to control the natural functions of sense. His six stern themes of degenerate humour, "Romeo and Juliet", "Hamlet", "Othello", "Timon", "Lear", "Macbeth", were, there is small doubt, lessons to attain the standard of strength that Jonson proposed:

"I will prefer for knowledge none but such
As rule their lives by it and can becalm
All Sea of Humour with the marble trident
Of their strong spirits : others fight below
With gnats and shadows ; others nothing know".
(*"Poetaster"*, A. iv. s. 3.)

With such force are the six name-tragedies set upon degenerate humour that it seems at first sight as though Shakespeare were exhibiting humanity as the sport of its complexions; as if, having created a man of a certain humour, he forthwith plunges him into such circumstances as he is least able to resist, but that must inevitably cause his ruin. Yet upon consideration the master's design shines forth more nobly and we find it akin to that of Seneca who "toiled with all his might to arm virtue against frailty, fear, and vicious appetite".

Hamlet is seen to fail in that, knowing his weakness of complexion so soon as he could "of men distinguish", he yet forbore to fortify and make stable his soul: Romeo, because far from restraining the effeminate ardour of his complexion, he threw himself wantonly into "extremity": Othello, because as a man of balanced humours, and ordered emotions, he suffered himself to be surprised at an unwatched outpost by a stronger than he.

Plainly "Blood and judgment" is the theme of one and all of the greater tragedies, blood and judgment not "well commingled", or not maintained in balance, but warring inexorably together as complexionate sense with incomplexionate reason.

CORRESPONDENCE.

WANTED A WRITTEN CONSTITUTION.

To the Editor of the SATURDAY REVIEW.

Loughton, Cherry Hinton, Cambridge,
28 August 1911.

SIR,—Your correspondent, Mr. Cosby, is mistaken in his ideas of written and unwritten law. The expression of the great controversy has once more been twisted, so that a straight answer to the following question becomes imperative. Can an Act of Parliament be held to destroy another Act of Parliament? If it can, then written or unwritten law of whatsoever kind is an

impotent thing, as all Acts of Parliament, under such conditions, must count for nothing. Each Act can be made invalid by another Act, and so on ad infinitum. Thus the very basis of government is an absolute absurdity. The very Parliament Act in question is, in this sense, an Act of parliamentary impotence.

No, Sir, it is time we looked at our present situation honestly and cast aside all this business of self-deception. The British Constitution can never be destroyed—not even by the present Parliament Act, nor because of the default of duty by the Lords—because it (the British Constitution) was founded upon an Act of Parliament (an Act passed by King, Lords, and Commons) which constituted the legal basis of all Acts of Parliament. In other words, the Act of Parliament (*Habeas Corpus Writ*) upon which real freedom rests is the legal basis of revolt from illegal rule or absolute forms of government. It is significant of party ideas in this purely national matter, that the principal organ of the Government has challenged me to prove my indictment of the unconstitutional nature of its own particular position. In this sense, like thousands of my fellow countrymen, I am a free-born Englishman and belong to no particular political organisation. If Unionist policy is going to act in defiance of an Englishman's free rights, then it is going to be a policy of doom to its propagators, and nothing can save it from the same fate which is dogging the actions of the present Government. Here is written the warning to the Unionist party. If it is intent on assuming, as the Government itself assumes, the Parliament Act to be a legal form of revolt from tyranny, then the House of Lords possessed no legal ground whatever for rejecting or even amending the said Act. The attitude of the Peers during the crisis was in every sense an illegal one. There is no gainsaying this. Moreover, should the Unionist party ever be returned to power they will have no legal ground of excuse for repealing or even modifying the Act. The Opposition will look to this, and the consequences will be a similar crisis to the present one.

If, on the other hand, the stalwart policy of resistance is adhered to as the legal and constitutional form of repudiation, then not even the use of armed force on the part of the Government can justify the executive form of the Act. But whether official Unionism remains true or disloyal to the strict demands of English law, English justice, and English freedom, it is certain that unofficial Constitutionism (the rank and file, or free Commoners) may be depended upon. Freedom to them is that which makes life worth living, and it needs but the patriotic soul of one man to set fire to such an inextinguishable spark. The country may be both politically and clerically rotten, and its Press, to a great extent, may be despotic, but the nation, as a nation, is not yet fallen to a level of a community of slaves or bondmen.

Here, then, is to be seen the real issue. One party in the State has, by means of craft or intimidation—it does not matter how—revived the absolute powers of the Crown which the Great Charter destroyed. The Act, with the exception of the Stalwarts, or Men of Honour, has been meekly acquiesced in by another party. It now remains for the independent people of the State to discover the whole farce of the thing by a declaration of their independence.

This Act is an offence upon Christianity, since it completely destroys what the greatest Christian apostle of freedom instituted, and this, above everything else, must eternally damn such an Act.

I am, Sir, your obedient servant,
H. C. DANIEL.

THE DUTY OF UNIONISTS.

To the Editor of the SATURDAY REVIEW.

34 Essex Street, Strand, London.

11 September 1911.

SIR,—Your correspondent "X", when he says that "the débâcle of 1906 was caused by members of the party whose votes were not available", is confusing

effect with cause. The votes were not available because the party had leaders it did not believe in, leaders with nerveless hands and no policy. Since that date, those same leaders have led us from defeat to defeat, culminating in the disgrace of 10 August last. Could there have been any dying more ludicrously soft than the extinction of the House of Lords on that occasion? Yet that was the doing of those leaders. The bulk of the party was and is with the Die-hards. Is it conceivable that, if the Die-hards had the control of the purse and the political machine which is now with those leaders, those men would continue to lead the party? Not for an hour. Would Marshal Bazaine, after Metz, have ever again been allowed to lead the armies of France? Therefore, in my opinion, it is the duty of Unionists to work for the retirement of those leaders and for their replacement by men representing the vital forces of the party; and for the purpose of putting pressure on those leaders to retire, Unionists should, while not abandoning their association, abstain from voting for the party until they do. It is no mere divergence of opinion as to a move that dictates this view. It is profound disbelief in the possibility of any future for the party or the causes it represents until it has emancipated itself from the nerveless leadership which has been its since the days when Lord Salisbury headed the party.

Yours,
G. E. M. SKUES.

MR. LLOYD GEORGE'S FIGURES.
To the Editor of the SATURDAY REVIEW.

Clarkston, Glasgow, 19 August 1911.

SIR,—You have allowed me to draw public attention to certain mis-statements by the Chancellor of the Exchequer on the subject of finance. They are only samples taken from a large and varied assortment. His speech of 11 May of this year, for instance, was made up in large measure of perversions of fact. The quotations in what follows are from Hansard's report of the debate:—

Col. 1426. "He" (Sir Frederick Banbury) "supported a Government which for ten years had surpluses, and which never, during the whole of that ten years, paid a penny to the Old Sinking Fund."

The "amounts issued on account of Old Sinking Fund" in the years referred to will be found at their respective places in the Finance Accounts of the United Kingdom and are as undernoted:—

Volume for 1895-6, page 86 ... £765,341 11s. 10d.
" 1896-7 is out of print.
" 1898-9, page 88 ... £1,128,009 19s. 3d.
" 1899-1900, page 90 ... £185,957 13s. 1d.
" 1905-6, page 91 ... £1,413,907 5s. 10d.

Of course it was only before the war and after it was over that there were surpluses available.

Having thus delivered himself on the subject of the Old Sinking Fund, Mr. George proceeded to denounce the practice, which he attributed to his opponents exclusively, of borrowing against current expenditure.

Col. 1431. "When we had a burden imposed by the Naval Works Act they always resorted to borrowing, and it was only when the Prime Minister became Chancellor of the Exchequer that he began to pay current expenditure out of revenue."

As a matter of fact, that is precisely what Mr. Asquith did not do. In his first year, 1906-7, the money required for expenditure on naval and military works, &c., was £5,974,749 16s. 3d., and he raised practically the whole of it, say £5,555,000, "by the creation of additional debt", although he had at his disposal (Parliament consenting) a surplus of £3,465,620 from the accounts of the preceding year. The corresponding entries will be found at pages 11, 12, 13 of the volume for 1906-7. In every subsequent year, not excluding those during which we have had the advantage of Mr. George's own management, the procedure has been exactly the same, as may be seen by anyone who will take the trouble to refer to the successive volumes of the Finance Accounts of the United Kingdom. The

entries will be found in every case in the general cash account with which the volume commences.

On the subject of Mr. Asquith's achievements in debt redemption, we have, on 16 May,

Col. 1858. "My right hon. friend in the three years he held the office reduced the National Debt by £42,360,000."

The three years referred to are 1905-6, 1906-7, 1907-8. What Mr. Asquith had to do with 1905-6 was to announce the results. He was in office for the last quarter only. The arrangements for the year were the work of his predecessors. The true figures for Mr. Asquith's period are:—

Volume for 1906-7, page 94 ... £13,708,000
" 1907-8, page 94 ... £15,729,000

The amount at the credit of Mr. Asquith's two years is thus 29½ millions, something, no doubt, to be proud of if it had been the result of economy and good management. In reality, his excess of debt redeemed, as compared with what was done by his predecessors in their years of peace, was very much less than his excess of income tax exacted. He maintained the tax on "unearned" income at war level during the whole of his period of office, and that excess alone was probably not less than twenty millions.

The extreme wildness of Mr. George's utterances on the first of the occasions in question may probably be in part accounted for by the unpleasantness of the situation in which he had placed himself. He was charged with having invited certain railway companies to withhold their income tax payments till after the end of the financial year, the matter having already been broached in Parliament during his absence; and he had, in Mr. Steel Maitland's phrase, attempted to "brazen it out" with the assertion given to the public by means of a press interview that, in taking the course complained of, he had merely reverted to a practice from which Mr. Austen Chamberlain had departed. His line of defence in the House of Commons was different. So far as regards this transaction with the railway companies, it was that he had done nothing at all: "I certainly gave no instructions to the Board. . . . I am perfectly certain that no instructions were given by the Treasury to the Chairman of the Board on the subject at all." (Hansard, col. 1452.)

I am, Sir, your obedient servant,
JOHN GOVAN,
Fellow of the Faculty of Actuaries in Scotland.

SOMERSET HOUSE UP TO DATE.

To the Editor of the SATURDAY REVIEW.

21 August 1911.

SIR,—I cannot suppose the following to be an isolated instance of the methods of persecution adopted (by order, no doubt) at Somerset House; but in so far as the public is interested it may not be without instruction. In 1876 a kinsman of mine, owner of a small landed property, died, leaving a will, a widow and five children. Three years later the widow died intestate and the property devolved upon the children, under the care of two trustees as appointed by the father. In 1882 it was deemed expedient to realise the property on the children's behalf, and this was done. One of the trustees subsequently died; the other, though still living, is incapacitated by age and infirmity from taking the necessary steps to repudiate a claim for "legacy and succession duty" now for the first time put in, thirty years after the event, by the authorities of Somerset House. A paper of questions, wholly unanswerable for lack of data, issues, and with it a demand for payment of arrears. Presumptive evidence exists as to the previous settlement of this; but, apart from it, may one not fairly ask:—(a) Why has this claim not been made before? (b) Why, as in the case of other money claimants, no time limit applies to the claims of Somerset House? (c) Who, at this rate, is safe?

In the meantime, and in face of an absolute puzzle, the representatives of the deceased, now men and women of mature age, are constrained to seek legal

assistance. The lawyer rubs his hands and the matter hangs fire while the costs accumulate.

Trusting you will find space for this letter,
I am faithfully yours
M. B.

THE AGITATOR.

To the Editor of the SATURDAY REVIEW.

Glasgow, 13 September 1911.

SIR,—The article on "Labour and its Claims" in your issue of 2nd inst. contains these sentences: "The wages of the poorer paid have remained practically stationary. No wonder that among this class a cunning agitator finds material to his hand for the fomenting of every labour trouble". That implies, and the whole article confirms the inference, that the agitator is a self-seeker. I do not think you could establish such a proposition, but I am not going into that matter. What I wish to ask is, even assuming that the agitator's motive is not quite pure, does he deserve to be condemned? Does he not act rightly in focussing public attention on social injustice? Failing him, who is there to speak out?

I read attentively the half-crown monthly and six-penny weekly periodicals. In not one of them do I find a warm human appeal made for the obscure toiler. I admit having seen references to low wages used as party ammunition, but nobody took that seriously or cared even to remember it, and quite rightly, for the object of such references was not the betterment of the worker, but padding out an argument. I have regularly attended church, but heard never the suggestion that the poor railwayman deserved more consideration. I have been present at many meetings of shareholders, railway, rubber, industrial. Not seldom I heard the chairman at such meetings refer grumbly, as explanatory of the state of the dividend, to increases in wages. I never once heard director or shareholder inquire whether the board were satisfied that an adequate wage was being paid. No, that was a matter left to secretaries, managers, and foremen, whose duty it was to keep the hands quiet, and so long as such condition of quietude obtained, all was for the best, whether just or unjust.

I happen to be solicitor to an Employers' Association representing an employing power of about 6000 men. Never once has the question of the adequacy of the trade wage been spontaneously and generously considered. Every increase asked by the men has been conceded with the most desperate reluctance. Why should that be the case? Yet it is the case in every trade. But now that the agitator has drawn attention to the fact, the lowness of wage is recognised and will be remedied. Would that have taken place without him? I submit we should have waited long ere the director, the employer, the clergyman, the professional man, or the philosopher would have voiced the claims of the poor—pertinently I mean, not in windy generalities.

So far are we from the grace of Christian unselfishness that we yet, and still I fear for many a day, need the loud-voiced agitator to make us aware of our neglect of duty. The name agitator is not a name to be ashamed of. The agitator may, as he recently has done, draw timely attention to a wrong which, if allowed to remain unremedied, might necessitate a too drastic remedy, in other words revolution. The province of the statesman is to anticipate the agitator and gradually adjust social conditions to progressive thought and changing circumstances. I am aware that is a counsel of perfection, but to state it is not amiss.

Yours, etc.
"SYMPATHETIC."

THE STATE AND THE STRIKERS.

To the Editor of the SATURDAY REVIEW.

Liverpool, 6 September 1911.

SIR,—I have read a letter in your last issue, which is signed Joseph Finn, in which you are rebuked for your

remarks, and the writer thinks that if you persist in writing in this strain you are digging England's grave. As a working man of over thirty years' standing, I would like to offer a few remarks.

As far as I can gather, Mr. Finn's grievance seems to be that you have backed up the Government's policy in the use of soldiers to defeat the aims of the railway workers who had left work at twenty-four hours' notice. This action was a blow at the whole nation, and was intended to bring them to their knees in submission to some two hundred thousand men, or worse still to the strike executive.

The responsible Ministers of the Government have already pointed out that the soldiers were only used for the purpose of protecting life and property and in no sense against the strikers, who, as long as they did not break the law, had nothing to fear from either military or police, but the Government knew of the violence which was taking place in various centres and had to be prepared, and after events showed the wisdom of such preparedness.

Suppose, on the other hand, that the railway companies had started smashing up the railways, just for spite, say, then the soldiers would have had to be turned on them if required to make them desist, as people cannot do just as they like with their own especially when it is a railway. Well, no doubt in the eyes of the strikers it would have been quite right to use the soldiers in that emergency.

This was not like a private dispute, and no Government could stand aside and watch the large towns being brought to a state of starvation and all industries stopped, and if the Government could not put an end to a state of affairs like that, then the people themselves would have had to do it in self-defence, and if that had come about, then England's grave would now have been dug before even you could have got your sentiments into print.

Yours faithfully,
W. R. F.

TRADE UNIONS AND THE LAW.

To the Editor of the SATURDAY REVIEW.

36 Lincoln's Inn Fields, London,
6 September 1911.

SIR,—It is generally agreed, that is, by all who are not rabid trade unionists or proposing to stand as friends of the people at the next election, that the Trade Disputes Act 1906 must be destroyed, preferably at the hands of the common hangman. But this general agreement is in itself a danger. What is beyond question is apt to escape the notice of the legislator—it brings him no halo of praise or abuse. Consequently the matter must be forced and forced continually on the attention of public and Parliament.

That the Government will try to shirk their responsibilities is to be expected. They will whine that there is no mandate, whatever that may be. In decent English, there is no great chance of vote-catching. But that is hardly the whole business of Government. Here there is a simple and obvious duty. All parties in the Lords and the Commons share the infamy of this Act, and the best elements must unite to remove it from the Statute Book.

After the recent strikes no one defends peaceful picketing. But many defend that part of the Act which destroyed the common law of England as set forth in the Taff Vale case. Had that decision been left untouched, does anyone imagine that the recent strikes would have been begun thus irresponsibly and wantonly? The stock trade union arguments are not worth the trouble of answering. The immunity of "benevolent funds" should begin at home, and the shriek that the unions do not trust the Courts—the finest compliment ever paid to the impartiality of the Judges—is no reason for putting them above the law.

I am, Sir, your obedient servant,
EUGENE C. PERRIN.

FAITH IN THE GOVERNMENT.

To the Editor of the SATURDAY REVIEW.

12 September 1911.

SIR,—I have not seen it mentioned in the press that many retired civil servants (myself among them), having lost all confidence both in the present Government and its supporters, are insuring at Lloyd's and elsewhere the receipt of their pensions in full for the rest of their lives.

A RETIRED CIVIL SERVANT.

"GERMAN RESERVISTS IN ENGLAND."

To the Editor of the SATURDAY REVIEW.

1 Victoria Street, Westminster S.W.

6 September 1911.

SIR,—The press calls attention to the fact that a number of reservists of the German Army, resident in London, have received short notice to rejoin their colours, and a newspaper has received information from authoritative quarters (sic) calculated to impress the public that the notices may after all be only meant to test the so-called patriotism of the said reservists.

Having regard to the existing acrimonious controversy, not, be it known, between the French and German nations, but between the French and German Cabinets, which is another thing, it would be absurd to suppose that this order had no connexion therewith; but as the merits or demerits of the controversy are a secret with the members of the Cabinets concerned, it seems to me a very pertinent question to ask, Which would be the most patriotic action on the part of our German reservist friends, to comply with the dictatorial orders of their irresponsible Cabinet and be probably compelled to murder or be murdered for no reason known to themselves, or to exercise their rights as members of a free and constitutional nation and demand to know, as every citizen of a free community has the right to know, the full and unvarnished truth of the controversy?

As the details are a Cabinet secret, it is impossible for public opinion to exercise its constitutional privilege to determine which is right and which is wrong, as regards the individual phase of the dispute, but that both Cabinets are wrong, constitutionally, is an incontrovertible fact, and should war result they will both become criminally responsible. It therefore follows that our German reservist friends should reflect that by obeying the order, instead of acting patriotically, they would be simply conniving with and promoting the individual ambitions of the Cabinet, at the risk of their lives and reputation for sanity.

When will the peoples of the different nations learn and understand that Cabinets are not endowed with the supernatural gift of infallibility?

Only by a most extraordinary and phenomenally singular coincidence, a veritable miracle of nature, would it be possible for any Cabinet, or combination of Cabinets, as Cabinets are constituted to-day, to produce, from their limited mental resources, the particular factor or factors necessary to reach a truthful climax in any international problem that they may be called upon to elucidate. How puerile therefore and how childishly farcical must be their conduct, in pretending to be physically capable of accomplishing what to all intents and purposes is a physical impossibility, when even amongst the whole population or the two or even three populations these precise factors may exist in the mind of only one person, who, by reason of the stupid Cabinet secrecy, is compelled to keep silent.

The interests of all nations are identical by reason of their interdependence, therefore secrecy is not only unnecessary but distinctly criminal, because it renders physically impossible any intelligent solution of any international problem.

Yours faithfully,

A. WATTERS, Hon. Treasurer
Independent Political Association.

"THE PURPLE LAND."

To the Editor of the SATURDAY REVIEW.

Hartford Bridge, Winchfield,

4 September 1911.

SIR,—In the notice on "Uruguay" in your issue of 2 September your reviewer, referring to the disaster to our arms at Buenos Ayres in 1807 (not in 1806) says "no British army of a like size—Whitelocke had 16,000 men—has ever yet laid down its arms without a blow".

In justice to the memory of the gallant officers and men who laid down their lives on that fatal 5 July, may I point out that Whitelocke's force numbered under 10,000 men. Out of the 5000 he sent into the town to make the attack, the columns on both flanks were successful, capturing strong posts, over 1000 prisoners, and thirty-three guns. The unfortunate columns in the centre were overwhelmed by the fire from the house-tops, and were eventually, after a most protracted and desperate resistance, compelled to capitulate in detail. But the total who thus "laid down their arms" only numbered 94 officers and 1831 men, of whom 250 were wounded, and they did not surrender until the British losses amounted to 72 officers and 928 men killed and wounded, in addition to the 250.

Whitelocke was blamed (and suffered) for not using the remainder of his force to renew the attack on the city. He, however, agreed upon an exchange of prisoners and to evacuate the province, and most people who have studied the details of the campaign will agree with Fortescue that this decision of Whitelocke was "the one instance of wisdom he had manifested during the campaign". But there is a vast difference between 16,000 British soldiers surrendering "without a blow" and 2000 survivors surrendering after incurring losses to the extent cited above. A most excellent account of the whole business appeared in the "United Service Magazine" in 1905 by Captain Lewis Butler, and, needless to say, Fortescue sets forth the whole story most admirably.

Your obedient servant,

WILLOUGHBY VERNER.

THE SCOTTISH CHARACTER.

To the Editor of the SATURDAY REVIEW.

Dunain, Inverness, N.B., 11 September.

SIR,—I cannot refrain from an indignant protest against the unpleasant remarks on Scots or Scotchmen which appear in this week's number. The writer forms an idea of the Scotchman, and proceeds to question whether the members of the nation who do not conform to that type can rightly be described as Scots. Those of us who live in the country and who know how many varieties of national character are to be found there, who daily encounter men who are neither "pragmatic nor pawky", resent this superficial classification.

It is exactly as if we were to declare that the man who does not conform to the Continental idea of John Bull—bullying, blustering, blundering—is not a typical Englishman.

I am yours faithfully,

AN INDIGNANT SCOT.

A STATION IN LIFE.

To the Editor of the SATURDAY REVIEW.

18 Lansdown Crescent, Bath,

10 September 1911.

SIR,—On page 331 of this week's SATURDAY REVIEW Mr. Filson Young writes about "that old-fashioned English idea of doing one's duty 'in that station of life to which it hath pleased God' to call one". If he is quoting from the Catechism he should say "in that state of life unto which it shall please God". It seems

to me there may be a great difference between the state of life to which it hath pleased God to call one and the state unto which it shall please God to call one.

I know this part of the Catechism is often misquoted, but I think most people, in reading Mr. Filson Young's article, will think he is intending to quote from the Catechism.

I am, Sir, your obedient servant,
CHARLES P. BRABAZON.

To the Editor of the SATURDAY REVIEW.

Ross, 11 September 1911.

SIR.—In your last issue Mr. Filson Young misquotes the Church Catechism; which has nothing about "a station in life"; but "to do my duty in that state of life unto which it shall please God to call me".

I am, Sir, your obedient servant,
A. G. SOWERSBY.

ART IN MUSEUMS.

To the Editor of the SATURDAY REVIEW.

Oxford and Cambridge Club,
4 September 1911.

SIR.—In your issue of the 2nd, under the above heading, a scathing article appears upon "crimes of vandalism" perpetrated at the South Kensington Museum. Your writer mentions more particularly the absurd practice newly adopted by the museum wiseacres of placing some of the finest statues in the collection with their backs sheer against a wall. "It should be, one would have thought, obvious to the meanest intelligence that a statue worth looking at must be visible from all sides if it is to be of real use to the student or give a full meed of pleasure to the visitor."

In the April number of the "English Illustrated Magazine" for this year I wrote an account of the famous Gloria Gate of Santiago Cathedral in Galicia, Spain, and wrote concerning the replica thereof very much to the same intent as did your correspondent last week regarding statues. This is what I felt forced to say: "At South Kensington it is placed with its back to a wall, on the spaces of which, between the arches, are crowded wood carvings of other periods, and the forest of other antiquities in the same room absolutely prevents the Gate being seen except in penny numbers."

This confirmation of your correspondent's views regarding the "art" direction of South Kensington, written months ago, I thought ought to be recorded.

Yours obediently,
J. HARRIS STONE.

"ENCOURAGING ENGLISH MUSIC."

To the Editor of the SATURDAY REVIEW.

13 September 1911.

SIR.—I fully appreciate Mr. Runciman's musical patriotism, but perhaps I may be allowed to explain to him that English music is not encouraged because there is so little really meritorious to encourage. However, I warmly support his views about musical sameness at the Queen's Hall concerts, the constant repetition of certain compositions of the great composers at the sacrifice of their lesser known works, but Mr. Runciman must not blame Sir Henry Wood for this, who is a true and genuine artist, but Mr. Robert Newman, who judges music entirely from the pecuniary standpoint, has no musical scruples, and believes only in the music that is likely to make the most money by appealing to the public, such as Tschaikovsky's "1812" overture, a prime favourite of Mr. Newman.

Yours faithfully,
G. STRANGWAYS COLLINS.

REVIEWS.

THE SLUMP IN SLUDGERY.

"Personality and Telepathy." By F. C. Constable. London: Kegan Paul. 1911. 7s. 6d. net.

THE £1000 challenge to all and sundry telepathists to furnish satisfactory proofs of thought-transference has not been taken up, and on 1 September the "Daily News" published the "Confessions of a Telepathist" in the form of a clean-breasted letter from Mr. Douglas Blackburn. He claims to be the sole survivor of the group of psychical research experimenters, of whom Myers, Gurney, Podmore, and Sidgwick were the most prominent, and now confesses that these enthusiasts were hoaxed by the conjuring tricks of himself and Mr. G. A. Smith. Beneath an immense parade of searching scientific tests, themselves perfectly honest but absurdly gullible, Myers and Gurney, according to this revelation, were duped as easily as chawbacons at a fair. Mr. Smith, however, indignantly denies the whole business.

We have all been so awed by learned treatises on subliminal psychology, and so secretly pleased to find the marvellous coming back into fashion, that the present slump in Sludges—though, indeed, there is a medium in all things—is rather upsetting. The serried volumes of the Psychical Research Society, and the tomes that are constantly appearing on the subject, cannot be all bosh. No doubt the supernatural side of Spiritualism was always its weakest, albeit there were some alleged happenings which staggered even Podmore, the champion of a "spiritualism without spirits" theory. But the revenant business was so foolishly trivial and mid-Victorianly vulgar that it became impossible to believe that Mrs. Piper, Mrs. Verrall, and the rest were really commerçing with discarnate existences. On the other hand, it is becoming recognised how little we know of the workshop of our own minds or of the mysterious mental powers which the Five Senses normally imprison and cage up. Especially the influence of spirit upon matter seems to open up an almost untrodden field of speculation and inquiry.

Mr. Constable has a theory of his own which he grafts upon Kant's doctrine of the categories of the sensibility and the understanding. Kant, who was influenced by Swedenborg, touched the fringe of a theory of telepathy, but there was little authenticated evidence to his hand. With him Mr. Constable holds that human personality or human mind is only a partial and mediate manifestation in a phenomenal universe of time and space of the real intuitive and subliminal Personality or Mind. Such higher mind is unconditioned by time, space or form, and telepathy is the formless, spaceless and timeless communion between intuitive mind and mind, or between intuitive mind and external objects. For such communion the normal channels of sense are not required, but the intuitive self of the agent, behind his personality, must be supposed, if there are such things as phantasms, to determine itself phenomenally, and to affect space where the agent's body is not. There is not, according to this theory, direct thought-transference from one human consciousness to another—for the agent's mental impression is seldom the same as the percipient's: a dying man, e.g., does not necessarily picture himself as cadaverous—but only a communion between the two subliminal personalities, the effect on that of the percipient resulting in supposed perceptions, called forth from the storage of ideas by the will. For there is no cognition apart from will, however unaware we may be that we are exercising it, and even in the case of hypnotism, where the directive force of the operator may seem to supersede that of the patient, it is really the will of the latter which has command over the understanding, albeit its operation is influenced by the will of the hypnotiser.

In assuming a radiation, unconditioned by space and time, from personality to personality, any idea of actual

brain-waves must be ruled out, as a reminiscence of that exploded materialism which regarded a pig and a martyr, a prayer and a beef steak, as alike atomic movement. For the force of material vibrations would vary inversely with the square of the distance. And certainly such a theory would be incompatible with communications from the dead, whose cerebral mechanism has perished in the grave. There is no doubt, however, a tempting analogy between telepathic communication and wireless telegraphy, explaining the highly partial and seemingly casual character of such communication. Why does one person see or hear things and not another, although the latter might antecedently have been supposed likely to do so and the former not? The answer which suggests itself is that of some exceptional attunement. Everybody receives the communication, but only one here or there does so consciously. Only, then, what about accidental groups of percipients? And what about our old friend, the haunted house, where every tenant gives notice? Mr. Constable has actually brought himself, though with much searching of heart, to think that "the houses themselves (forms of matter) must have something to do with the hauntings in them. We must hold that the human experience of the hauntings, when embodied, has had effect on the particular form of matter. The houses 'take' negative photographs of the conduct of the hauntings when living, and some living individuals can afterwards develop these photographs positively". We should recommend scrubbing and white-washing. Mr. Constable relies on the fact that ghosts—the wicked baronet who walks the old corridor, or the lady in satin who wrings her hands in the pleached alley—live entirely in the past. With the question of existence beyond the grave he refuses to meddle. But he is clear that the human manifestation of our personality is not entitled to permanence, seeing that powers and excellencies of intellect and character are "the result of evolution in relation to human environment", which is mostly the creation of selfish class distinctions. Why, he asks indignantly, should Eton and Christ Church confer immortality rather than a board school and the gutter? We were really not aware that Shakespeare was at Eton and Christ Church, though Milton, the intellectual aristocrat, was, to be sure, a University man. In another world, we understand, his mind and that of a board school boy should be level.

Mr. Constable frankly points out the thin places of his theory of travelling personality. If there is anything objective in "appearances", it is clear that the agent mind must have power to affect space in some way. Sometimes two percipients see the same phantasm from in front and from behind respectively. There was a child that appeared to a Russian family—and their dog. "Le chien ne cessait d'aboyer de toutes ses forces, et courrait et aboyait en suivant le mouvement de l'apparition." And then there is the clothes question, though Mr. Constable sees no difficulty in this; for how, he naïvely asks, could the ghost appear without clothes? We are reminded of the skit on the will-precipitation craze of thirty years ago, in which the host at a picnic successfully "precipitates" a mayonnaise, but forgets to precipitate a dish to contain it. Again, does "travelling personality" explain prevision? Another difficulty about spirits from the vasty deep is that they have nothing sensible to say. The strange thing is that the Christian supernaturalism of the primitive and middle ages, with all its exquisite imaginative beauty and spirituality, should be considered exploded, while scientific psychologists are making one another's flesh creep with Cock Lane ghosts and all the silly paraphernalia and jargon of modern spookery. Mr. Constable reserves his opinion. He thinks there is something in these attempts of spirit to give flesh the go-by, and so do we. But it is desperately hard to disentangle from the quackery which has overlaid it.

SEA POWER IN SHACKLES.

"Sea Law and Sea Power." By T. Gibson Bowles.
London: Murray. 1910. 7s. 6d. net.

"Sea Law and Sea Power" is the most complete endeavour to rouse public opinion against the Declaration of London, though in fairness we should also add a tribute to the persistent hard work of the organisers of the Imperial Maritime League. Mr. Bowles is frankly partisan in his views, as any man must be who is convinced that the vital interests of his country are being signed away. It is easy to detect in the pages of his book an absence of broad views but Mr. Bowles is not a Chatham; and we could by comparisons show a lack of appreciation of the relative importance of different war operations, but Mr. Bowles is not a S. Vincent. He is frankly a free-lance who writes for democracy and gives it the best food it can assimilate. Here, by means of an ill-considered treaty framed in the main by a land Power which is looking to a war with us in the near future, we are bound for years to come in reference to operations of war on the sea, where we are supreme, and could therefore, as in the past, make our own laws. Is the treaty good or bad? "Bad", said Mr. Bowles, and so he set to work to kill it as best he could. If, then, his effort is disfigured by redundancy and exaggeration, much may be forgiven to one who helps the plain man to a sound view. We can with good temper point out that "Sea Law and Sea Power" will probably be selling for waste paper a year hence, whereas Rear-Admiral Mahan's "Influence of Sea Power" will always command its price, in spite of Mr. Bowles' preface that no sailor has ever been able to teach the meaning of sea-power, and that the only explanation ever given to the public is that of "the naval expert who explains every Salamis and Trafalgar yet to come by adding up and carrying over totals of tons, guns, and pounds sterling, and foretells the fate of nations with absolute certainty by comparing aggregate totals plus wins, minus loses." That is the beginning and the end, and there is no more in it. This is excellent chaff, the humour of which will not be lost on the cynical reader who finds that Mr. Bowles in one chapter profoundly disapproves of the way our naval officers have been trained since 1904 under the new system, but yet, in spite of radically unsound training, and an ever narrowing margin under the plus and minus system, our Navy is, in his opinion, stronger than it has ever been. If the training is all wrong, as compared with the German system, Mr. Bowles must have arrived at his conclusion by sums, and we suspect his hatred of arithmetic is a matter of old standing in which the boy was father to the man, for his sums are wrong.

Mr. Bowles is again mistaken when he says that "the mere existence of the sea" is a barrier to invasion so that "Britain has never for eight centuries endured a hostile invasion". The most elementary study shows that the sea is an incomparably easier road for invasion than the land, always provided that there is no armed interference on the sea. From the time when the King of Mercia foiled Charlemagne by the creation of a navy, it has been the existence of armed force on the sea, and not the sea itself, which has been the barrier to invasion. If Mr. Bowles has provoked comparisons and criticisms, it is only fair to add that his book is not written to become a classic work. It is a fine piece of political polemics calculated to discredit Sir Edward Grey and his colleagues as the Ministers responsible for the Declaration of London. Against Sir Edward Grey he marshals facts on which he comments with pungent sarcasm. In one direction only does he find the Radical Government exhibit strength, and that is against the Constitution. They have signed the Declaration of London, and "the negotiations for this surrender have, during three years, been conducted, the articles of surrender have been settled, the surrender itself has been made without, so far as is known, or suggested, any previous knowledge or any previous sanction by the King, and certainly without any previous consultation of Parliament".

The Declaration of London "would deprive her (Great Britain) of every rag of naval power in war left by that Declaration (of Paris), would strike her Navy with final impotency and paralysis, and would leave her incapable of an effectually offensive naval action, and reduced for the protection of her existence to a straitened defensive against an actual invasion".

On one point only is Mr. Bowles and those whom he criticises at one. It is on the question of precedent on what has been our historical policy. It is universally conceded that for centuries up to the Declaration of Paris in 1856 British rulers and statesmen insisted on the doctrine that the enemy's goods were liable to seizure wherever found, whether the ship carrying them was neutral or otherwise. The Declaration of Paris abandoned the traditional policy of Great Britain, and Mr. Bowles would have us denounce the Declaration and resume our freedom of action. He sees that this was the first step, and the Declaration of London is justified by its apologists as a necessary development. They say that to abandon the Declaration of Paris is impossible, as it would "provoke an Armageddon". Why? The United States never subscribed to it, but no nation has gone to war with the United States, or even Spain for the matter of that, on account of her action. We have, as Mr. Bowles points out, lost every vestige of the quid pro quo, the abolition of privateering, since any vessel can bring out guns from the hold on the high seas and break the naval flag. We do not, however, consider it necessary to take this action. What we have to do is to take our stand on the doctrine the Hague Conference embodied in the convention on land warfare justifying a military commander in action "that is imperatively demanded by the necessities of war". We see no need for interfering with commerce in neutral vessels until we are in a position to blockade the coasts of our enemy. When that point is reached we see an imperative need for the widest liberty of action in which we can readjust our system of blockade to modern conditions brought about by the coastal dangers of torpedoes and mines, and the wide areas which blockaders can cover through steam and wireless telegraphy. Obviously the blockade of the supplies of Germany, whether direct or through Holland and Belgium, after her fleet has been defeated can be carried out most advantageously at the exits of the North Sea, as, for instance, in the narrow belt in the Straits of Dover. This liberty of action in reference to blockade is vital as a condition precedent to all negotiations. The authors of the Declaration of Paris never impaired it, and merely recorded that blockades, to be binding, must be effective. Sir Edward Grey has been trapped into a number of limitations through the folly, to which Mr. Bowles draws attention, of considering our interests as a neutral as paramount. Lord Rosebery, as Prime Minister, once parried a question on replacing H.M.S. "Victoria" by asking whether the Empire reeled at the loss of a battleship? We may well ask those hair-splitting critics in the Radical Press who are continually quoting the Russian treatment of the "Knight Commander" whether the Empire reeled because this merchant ship was sunk? Because Sir Edward Grey was bored with correspondence on this subject for some years, was that a reason for signing away our interests as a belligerent? We think the "Knight Commander", one of ten thousand steamers, has loomed too largely in the picture the Government has drawn of our interests, and, for the matter of that, we are very doubtful if even our interests as a neutral will be better protected by a foreign court of law at The Hague, which is rapidly becoming a suburb of Berlin. To that court of one British and twenty-one foreign representatives we shall have to submit all our acts of blockade, including those against Holland herself! Well may Mr. Bowles inveigh against a Government which itself welcomed this setting up of the decisions of a foreign court above our own prize courts, and agreed, according to Mr. Bowles, "to enforce those judgments itself, and to strangle its own fleet with its own hands".

In the limitation of blockade and the opportunity the Declaration of London affords of hampering our blockade by referring disputed matters to the International Prize Court, consisting of neutrals naturally anxious to break down a blockade, lie the great dangers to British policy. We were by no means deceived by the silence of the German Press, and it came with no surprise that when the House of Commons and the Colonial Conference accepted the Declaration the official ban on the Press in Germany was removed, and open exultation indulged in over this particular aspect of the question. In any war in the future, now that Europe consists of great military camps of nations in arms, blockade is our only weapon. Our freedom to use it as we think fit ought to have been jealously preserved. This has not been done, and if war breaks out the British Empire will use sea power as best it can, but for the first time it will be sea power in shackles.

THE WHITE HORSE.

"*The Ballad of the White Horse.*" By G. K. Chesterton.
London: Methuen. 1911. 5s.

In "The Ballad of the White Horse", Mr. G. K. Chesterton incidentally raises half-a-dozen questions that men may quarrel over for years without coming to conclusions. The question of propaganda in art is one. How far does Mr. Chesterton's brand of dogmatic Christianity make this Ballad and how far does it mar it? From one aspect the author's contention, intellectual and spiritual, that the Catholic Church, historically, is the principle of light warring against the pagan night of desolation and turmoil and witchcraft, is the inspiring heart and animating conscience of his verse. Minus the driving wheel of his Chestertonian thesis the poetic machinery could never have been put together to run smoothly and efficiently. On the other hand, though the fire and fervency of his convictions are implicit in the cunning craftsmanship of his finest stanzas they have also fathered the third of the poem which damages its illusion and seriously weakens its appeal as a work of art. Mr. Chesterton the propagandist and Mr. Chesterton the poet are like the Siamese twins, and an attempt to sever the two would be disastrous to both. Yet how often one longs for a surgical operation! A passage typical of the Ballad's strength and weakness may be quoted from Alfred's reply to the Danish songsters, when, disguised as a harper, he has gained admission to the enemy's camp:—

"I will even answer the mighty earl
That asked of Wessex men
Why they be meek and monkish folk,
And bow to the White Lord's broken yoke;
What sign have we save blood and smoke?
Here is my answer then.

"That on you is fallen the shadow,
And not upon the Name;
That though we scatter and though we fly,
And you hang over us like the sky,
You are more tired of victory
Than we are tired of shame. . . .

". . . Our monks go robed in rain and snow,
But the heart of flame therein;
But you go clothed in feasts and flames,
When all is ice within.
Nor shall all iron dooms make dumb
Men wandering ceaselessly,
If it be not better to fast for joy
Than feast for misery. . . .

". . . Therefore your end is on you,
Is on you and your kings,
Not for a fire in Ely fen,
Not that your gods are nine or ten,
But because it is only Christian men
Guard even heathen things.

"For our God hath blessed creation,
Calling it good. I know
What spirit with whom you blindly band
Hath blessed destruction with his hand;
Yet by God's death the stars shall stand
And the small apples grow."

This is good poetical propaganda, and inasmuch as it sums up vigorously "the case" for Alfred and his Christian civilisation, and damns the heathen invader root and branch, it may have come to stay in our literature. But this raises another vexed question. Will it make its appeal, like Mr. Kipling's "The Five Nations", as a literary document or as a poetic creation? How will Mr. Chesterton's Alfred strike the imagination of posterity? The shade of that sagacious, patient, resolute ruler hovers round his picture, even as one may evoke it from the bare bones of the Saxon Chronicle; and the figure would command applause had not Mr. Chesterton too openly snatched the monarch's harp from his hand to improvise his own philosophical manifesto. It is a question of where and when Alfred makes way for Chesterton and how often into that monarch's mouth are put avowals which are in place only on a modern pilgrimage to an ancient shrine. It does not disturb us much that the pagans are banged about the head with the bright, polished weapons of Mr. Chesterton's armoury so long as the hands that wield them are not obviously stained with printer's ink. And, on the whole, the illusion, allowing for lapses, holds good in more than half of the stanzas.

Fault-finding apart, Mr. Chesterton has done a notable thing. His poetic imagery is finely and sharply wrought, his language flashes and rings, with the most delicate changing beats of rhythm as his narrative passes from argument to description and action. As a whole the Ballad is admirably dramatic, and to keep the reader alert and curious for a thousand stanzas is a great tribute to the poet's imagination. The poet, of course, is at his best when he has dropped propaganda for pure description, as in the lines that show us Eldred the Franklin in the battle of Ethandune:—

"His face like a sanguine sunset,
His shoulder a Wessex down,
His hand like a windy hammer-stroke;
Men could not count the crests he broke,
So fast the crests went down."

"As the tall white devil of the Plague
Moves out of Asian skies,
With his foot on a waste of cities
And his head in a cloud of flies;

"Or purple and peacock skies grow dark
With a moving locust-tower;
Or tawny sand-winds tall and dry,
Like hell's red banners beat and fly
When death comes out of Araby,
Was Eldred in his hour."

Observe, so long as the imagery is satisfying to our senses we care not a fig whether Eldred in his battle fury is likened to Mahomed or not. We don't ask for justice, but we demand illusion. The Norseman and his gods may be, and indeed are, maligned and mishandled.

"When the psalm is roaring above the rune
And the Cross goes over the sun and moon."

But they must have fired the poet's imagination to have fused in such felicitous shapes, as in Ogier the Dane's war song:—

"The blind gods roar for Rome fallen
And forum and garland gone,
For the ice of the north is broken
And the sea of the north comes on."

"Down from the dome of the world we come,
Rivers on rivers down,
Under us swirl the sects and hordes
And the high downs we drown."

"Down from the dome of the world and down,
Struck flying as a skiff
On a river in spate is spun and swirled
Until we come to the end of the world,
That breaks short like a cliff."

Admirable too in their frequent clarity are the stanzas that show us what Mark the Roman stands for. Eldred the Saxon is also cunningly drawn, barring some conceits, and best of all is "King Guthrum of the Northern Sea, the Emperor of the Ships". To discuss the validity of Mr. Chesterton's Gael, "Colan of Caerleon", is to raise the most vexed of all questions—when poetry suddenly peters out into painted lath and plaster. Colan typifies the clay that refuses to fire in Mr. Chesterton's imagination. He is the Gael beloved of the journalist, our old friend, the "Celtic movement" incarnate, but luckily he has less to say than Alfred, and he is certainly picturesque in his unreality. It is evident that the Ballad is, so far, the high-water mark of Mr. Chesterton's achievements. Had he cut down the poem by a third, omitted the weak end and carefully chiselled away the purely modern ideas and allusions, that mark would stand a good foot higher.

THE LITERARY NOVELIST.

"The Beacon." By Eden Phillpotts. London: Fisher Unwin. 1911. 6s.

AT a not distant time it seemed possible that what Mr. Hardy had done for Wessex, Mr. Eden Phillpotts might do for the country which lies a little further to the west, but progress of years only seems to place realisation of this hope further from us. Comparison between the two writers is almost inevitable, but it is certainly to be avoided as far as possible. "The Beacon" may in some ways have been moulded from the Wessex novels, but, if this is so, it is, alas, an example of the imitation which does not flatter. The author has not failed from any lack of love of Dartmoor; rather, we should say, he has been overwhelmed by it, and the greatest work seldom comes from those who are mastered by their passions. Dowered with unnatural qualities, because they are supposed to dwell in a land whose magic has blinded their creator to all that is human and probable, the people of the tale are mere literary creations. They belong to the world of letters; they come from beyond the regions of things as we know them. We are given the story of a barmaid who is loved by two peasant farmers, both natives of the moor. The one is an aggressively strong character, and the other, Trevail, is apparently hopelessly weak. The girl marries the latter, and the book is based on her efforts to raise the man to her own high standard of thinking, for she is as forceful as her rejected lover. She is a Londoner by birth, but an adopted daughter of Dartmoor, and the great mother plays a big part in the lives of her three children. This attempt to give the inanimate a central and commanding position is a little overdone. English writers have seldom worked well with this idea of which the French are the perfect masters, and we see no reason to believe that Mr. Phillpotts' characters would have acted differently had they lived in Kent or Cumberland. Their actions are, indeed, as a rule, perfectly natural, but it is with their words we find fault. A young lady belonging to a university branch of the Fabian Society would probably have been wearied by such love-making as was addressed to this London barmaid when she arrived in Devonshire. We know the wisdom of those who work the soil, but their conversation, as recorded in "The Beacon", can only be described as "erudite". The folk who assembled nightly at the bar of the Oxenham Arms can best be compared with a company of young dons grown suddenly forgetful of their grammar. Barmaids doubtless acquire a certain philosophy, and not unlikely it is that found in old Omar's lay, but she who served at the "Arms" was as strangely pedantic in her talk as any of her admirers. She had views about the "mental

attributes" of her sex, and discussed them at length. One of her lovers had, we are told, a "nullifidian attitude" and that phrase precisely describes how we feel towards her and almost every person who struggles for life between the two covers of this book. It is necessary, however, to make one exception in favour of old Mortimore, Trevail's uncle, for, though the points of his character are exaggerated, he is of those who belong to the earth. With his contempt for weakness, his greed of gold, his hatred of opposition, he is a creature of whose parentage Balzac would not have been ashamed. The manner in which he destroyed his wealth to spite his heir before he took his own life is a fine touch and reveals the author's power of dealing with the seamy side of human nature. Dartmoor is a rough country, but surely Mr. Phillpotts can draw from it some gentler things which shall not put too great a tax upon our credulity? The study of the moor may be a fine thing and an absorbing task, but it would be worth any man's while to read correctly the hearts of its people. They cannot be judged by their surroundings; only direct intercourse will ever reveal their secrets.

NOVELS.

"The Country of the Blind, and other Stories." By H. G. Wells. London: Nelson. 1911. 2s. net.

Mr. Wells prefaces this volume with an admission that it is a collection rather than a selection of his short stories, and proceeds to reintroduce them with a kind of apology for their variable merits, and a characteristic little essay on the Short Story and what it ought to be. All the stories except five, the most recent, have appeared in volume form before; and if we are to believe in the author's naïve wonder at his having ceased to produce short stories, we must hint that his particular mine was probably becoming worked out. The majority are of course from the Romantic Vein of the Wells Mine—sketches of conditions possible in a world of advanced science; and of these the best are those in which Mr. Wells is purely fantastic and amusing, such as "The Man who could work Miracles". In others, however, we discover germs of the novelist of "Kipps"—confer the remarks of the ostler-boy in "The Stolen Bacillus" and the tale of "Miss Winchelsea's Heart". Others again are studies in psychology, such as "Under the Knife" and "A Slip under the Microscope". Finally, there are one or two in which allegories can be found. But when all are read and done, we feel they are done with; we cannot foresee Mr. Wells' reputation surviving on the strength of these short stories, because they are for the most part based on the romantic possibilities of science, and are therefore of an age and not for all time. Let Mr. Wells try his hand at the character-study, or short sociological sketch—let him write over with his matured powers the feeble "Jilting of Jane" with which this volume opens—and we feel sure he could succeed as he would. It is as a novelist, not as a romancer, that our sober posterity will respect him.

"Ladies Whose Bright Eyes." By Ford Maddox Hueffer. London: Constable. 1911. 6s.

The idea of a modern man being stunned or drugged or otherwise rendered unconscious, and awaking in an earlier civilisation, can scarcely be called an original one; we can recollect without undue pressure two novels and two plays based on this idea. In the best of these four, "A Yankee at the Court of King Arthur", Mark Twain combined a definite democratic purpose with a great deal of his own comedy. Mr. Hueffer, however, seems to have had no single artistic purpose in compiling this work, unless possibly he wishes to propound the theory that some publishers have souls to be saved. But in saying so, we have chosen our words to leave a loophole for complimenting Mr. Hueffer on the technique of his painting; for what we may call his archaeological imagination we have nothing but praise. The picture of mediæval England is most

vivid, though not all pleasant; it is only shadowed when his hero, Mr. Sowell, comes into unavoidable contrast with the Yankee of Mark Twain, as in the scene where the modern gentleman suffers the etiquette of a mediæval bath. The composition of the work as a whole leaves something to be desired; the story drags between the over-long introduction and the beginning of the action in the mediæval castle, and the conclusion we found rather wearisome, after the bright pageant of scenes in the middle and best portion of the book. Mr. Hueffer calls it a "romance", but we feel that its merits as a piece of historical imagining so far transcend its merits as a tale that "pageant" is a better description. With the reservations therein implied, it is a brilliant piece of work.

"The Hand of Diane." By Percy J. Hartley. London: Fisher Unwin. 1911. 6s.

France in the middle of the sixteenth century. A gentleman, scion of a noble house, returns to his home to find himself supposed to be dead, his ancestral house partially destroyed, and his mother blind. He falls in with an unknown damsel, whom, of course, we suppose to be Diane de Poitiers, until—lo! she is but sister of Diane. The story is very thin, and spun out to a far greater length than it can support; but the episodes move gracefully and their construction is skilful. The writing is quite commonplace, one bald phrase succeeding another alike in the descriptive passages and in the dialogues. The most remarkable thing about the book is the number of oaths that it contains; in some three hundred and fifty pages we counted without much trouble a hundred and thirty-four expletives. In point of fact we classified them: "Ma foi" easily heads the list with thirty-three, and its English equivalent is used eight times. "Mordieu", "par Dieu", "Despouieux" and "Morbleu" get into double figures; while other choice exclamations are "Diantre!", "Nom du Diable", "Mort de ma vie", and "Peste". There are others, and four saints are invoked. Anybody who likes this sort of thing is cordially recommended to read the book.

"A String of Beads." By Jittie Horlick. London: Duckworth. 1911. 6s.

The beads are incidents in the autobiography of an ingénue, who met a fascinating Anglo-Spaniard in the course of a Continental tour. We have motors, and Monte Carlo, and the strong silent Englishman who never told his love. The heroine overheard a description of herself as "infernally chaste" by her most intimate friend's husband. She is quite correct in her conduct, but her reception of the Spaniard's somewhat daring love-making would not have suggested that phrase to us as the exact label for her temperament. The story is vivacious enough.

SHORTER NOTICES.

"Blake's Vision of the Book of Job." By Joseph H. Wicksteed. London: Dent. 6s. net.

Blake was born in George II.'s reign and died in George IV.'s. He lived through the age of Johnsonian common-sense (shot with streaks of mystic emotion) and of Paley deism, shuddered at revolution and saw the utilitarian reform movement. In boyhood he was a dreamer, spying a Hebrew prophet beneath a tree and angels amid the haymakers in the dawn. Was this hosier's boy mad? Mr. Wicksteed and a circle of devotees are certain at least that there was method in his madness. Hence these studies of Blake's illustrations to the Book of Job. People who are tired of Omar Khayyam have taken up Blake and Job. We sit at their feet. But Mr. Wicksteed grants that this lonely thinker is "often abysmally unintelligible, even to the student". Avowedly a system-constructor, Blake's esoteric meanings cross and re-cross till all seems a tangle and a maze. And who will explain to us the explanations? How, e.g., can the female form (Eve) be regarded "either (a) as the ever-present token of man's lapse from Man, or (b) as the vehicle in which is preserved the beauty and goodness which the earthly man lacks to make him perfect man (or god)"? We confess that, after all Mr. Wicksteed has to

say, we fail to understand what is meant by the Lord Jesus (= universal humanity) being invoked to take on him "the Satanic Body of Holiness". Again, Blake may have taught that there is no God except Man, and that each individual carries divinity in his breast. But, having told us that this is shown in some of the illustrations by a facial resemblance between the Almighty and Job—and Satan, too—Mr. Wicksteed then finds, in illustration IX., a likeness between the Deity and Eliphaz. But the fact is, as the next illustration proves, that all Blake's old men are very much alike. As for Mr. Wicksteed's "chance discovery" of the "master-key" to the Blakean conceptions, viz. that the position of the hands and feet of the characters reveal a great spiritual theme, he has to explain it away in some cases, and to admit that the idea is not found in Blake's other works. How is it, we may ask, that in illustration XV. Behemoth has his right foot advanced? We are sceptical as to any thought-out system governing Blake's crazy pantheism. Mr. Wicksteed is himself puzzled, for example, to know how a "God" who only exists in individuals and has no power can yet be conceived as watching over, guiding, and suffering with the universe. Blake's philosophic and ethical ideas are claimed as anticipations of twentieth century thought and as amazingly modern. He was ardently humanitarian and a kind of Socialist—"the Oppressors of Albion in every City and Village mock at the Labourers' limbs! they mock at his starved children". He writes: "Are not Religion and Politics the Same Thing? Brotherhood is Religion". But a page or two on we find that Blake "scorned politics". And his doctrine that self-realisation, the will-to-live, is Satanic until we have died to self is hardly the Socialist point of view. Mr. Wicksteed's industry in elucidating the creations of this strange mind is admirable. But for our part we are content to pore with wonder over Blake's drawings, as did, no doubt, that earliest and most faithful disciple, his wife, whom, though she could neither read nor write, he taught to draw, to print and colour his engravings, and even to see visions of her own. "She alone kept his house or tenement; joined his thirty and forty mile walks into the country; rose at midnight to steady him under the tempestuous workings of artistic afflatus; believed in him when no one else believed in him; prayed with him when the very visions deserted him; and by her womanly skill, her innate sense of honour, her unfaltering courage and common-sense, saved him from worldly disaster and not seldom, perhaps, from his own theories of life". When he lay dying, after forty-five years of wedlock, he said, "You have ever been an angel to me".

"A Fauna of the Tweed Area." By A. H. Evans. Edinburgh: Douglas. 1911.

This is a solid and really well-produced book; and it is sure to be of value as a work of reference to naturalists living in or visiting Northumberland and Durham and the district. But it is rather dreary to read on page after page how often this bird or that has been "obtained" till at length the species is becoming extinct through the area: that word "obtained" is a hateful synonym for "destroyed"—one wishes naturalists would cease to use it.

"Revue des Deux Mondes." 1er Septembre.

The article of greatest topical interest in this volume is that of General Langlois on the Chief Command in the French Army. A generalissimo, he points out, such as exists in Germany in the person of the Chief of the General Staff, is not possible in France. Neither Government nor Parliament in France would consent to place any single general in such a position. In Germany he makes ready for war and conducts it under the supreme authority of the Emperor. It would also in France be undesirable, for such a general would have no abiding tenure of office; he would always be losing his post owing to the age-limit. The writer thinks this is no evidence of inferiority in democratic States, for what regulates such matters is in truth tradition, and tradition is in fact more durable than the work of any one man. This he discusses in an able argument. He is strongly opposed to all consultative committees, such as, apparently, in the past the French War Office has approved. They generally crush all initiative and are opposed to originality. Napoleon's plan of consulting competent individuals is the best. The Government must have a guiding hand in the disposition of the main forces, for it alone knows all the political facts, the obligations of its allies and friends, and the disposition of possible friends or enemies. M. Bertrand has a brilliant paper on a trip up the Nile in the heat of an Egyptian May.

For this Week's Books see page 374.

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